

# ***"What We Heard" Report***



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## 1.0 Introduction

In 2016, Council and the Planning and Development Department initiated the process of reviewing the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS), Land Use By-law (LUB) and Subdivision By-law (referred to as “planning documents”) for the Municipality of West Hants and the community of Hantsport. The review ensures the planning documents evolve and respond to the current environmental, social and economic climate, and meet the current needs of the residents of the Municipality. The West Hants *Public Participation Program Policy* seeks to include public consultation at different stages throughout the process.

Planning staff made public consultation a main priority during the Plan Review. The purpose of this “*What We Heard*” report is to document the comments that were received at each meeting and to summarize common trends. This report and findings will be presented to the West Hants Planning Advisory Committee (WHPAC) during the Plan Review process before the revised planning documents are drafted for consideration by the public, WHPAC and Council.

## 2.0 Background

### 2.1 Planning

Planning is the process of considering how land and resources should be used. Planning incorporates the community's goals and values for growth and development, provides options to reach those goals and attempts to minimize conflicts.

Planning is used to answer the following questions:

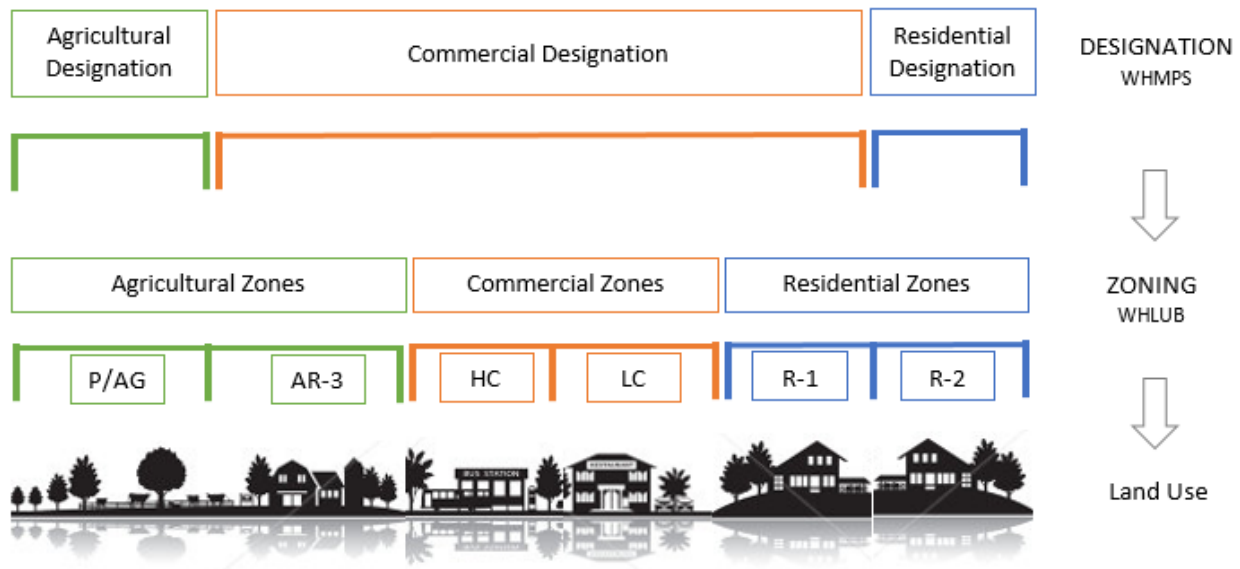
- ❖ What does the community want to become?
- ❖ What kind of land uses will help the community get there?
- ❖ Where should these land uses be located?
- ❖ What conflicts can arise from those land uses?
- ❖ How can we prevent or minimize those conflicts?

Answers to these questions can change over time as the environmental, social and economic climate of an area changes.

### 2.2 Planning Documents

The Province gives Municipalities powers through the Nova Scotia *Municipal Government Act* (MGA). The MGA authorizes Municipalities to establish planning documents to plan for the land within their boundaries. As noted previously, the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS), Land Use By-law (LUB) and the Subdivision By-law are known as "planning documents". The planning documents are adopted by Council. The MPS contains the long-term vision (20+ years) for what the community will become. The LUB contains the rules used to make that vision a reality. The Subdivision By-law regulates the division and addition of land.

**Figure 1: The Relationship between Designations, Zoning and Land Use**






Figure 1 can be read from the top down. The top layer shows the designation which is outlined by Council in the MPS. This is where Council has determined to concentrate residential, commercial, and industrial uses over the long term (20+ years). The second layer is the zoning which is outlined in the LUB. The LUB lists the permitted uses and regulations for each zone. As shown, sometimes the designations do not align with the zoning. The bottom layer represents the land use and shows what is happening on the ground.

### 2.3 Plan Review

All the areas of the Municipality are planned. The Town of Hantsport dissolved into the Municipality of West Hants in 2015, but the community of Hantsport still has its own planning documents. This Plan Review includes both the West Hants and Hantsport planning documents.

*Policy 16.1.2* of the West Hants MPS states that the planning documents should be reviewed every eight (8) years. The last review of the West Hants planning documents was conducted in 2008. *Policy IM-1* of the Hantsport MPS states that the planning documents should be reviewed every seven (7) years. The last review of the Hantsport planning documents was in 2010.

A plan review is a chance to review the current planning documents and make changes where necessary. The review is not intended to create completely new documents; it is an opportunity to review what currently works and what needs to be improved. Even if the MPS or LUB is amended or updated it does not mean that if land is being used for a purpose no longer permitted that purpose will become illegal, however it would restrict anyone wanting to develop that use as a new use in the area. For example: if someone has operated a farm on their property for the last 50+ years which is permitted under the current planning documents, and then the planning documents are amended to prohibit new farms in that area, the current farm is still permitted to operate as a legal non-conforming use. However, any new farms would not be permitted.

Public participation is important because the planning documents guide how the Municipality will make decisions on new development, land use, and infrastructure over the next 20 years. The feedback will help the Planning and Development Department learn what works and what could be done better to achieve the goals of our communities.

### 2.4 Research

Figure 2 outlines the Plan Review process to date. Prior to the public engagement sessions, planning staff conducted background research in specific topic areas including:

- ❖ Population
- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Land
- ❖ Agriculture
- ❖ Economic Development
- ❖ Infrastructure

- ❖ Industry and Resource
- ❖ Heritage and Culture
- ❖ Community Health and Services

The background information was used to update the current planning documents and develop questions for the public engagement sessions. The background reports can be found at: <https://www.westhants.ca/west-hants-plan-review.html>

Staff also completed a land use survey which included documenting the use of each property in the Municipality. The GIS Technician mapped out communities and travel routes; staff drove the routes and documented what they saw as the use of land from the road; and staff brought back the results to the GIS Technician to input into an online mapping application where residents could state if staff accurately identified the present use of their property.

**Figure 2: Plan Review Timeline**



### 3.0 Methods

The Public Participation Program Policy states that *“Council resolves to seek the views of the public and encourage public participation regarding any comprehensive review by developing and implementing a public engagement plan to inform the public and receive comments from the public. The contents are at the discretion of Council but may involve committees, meetings, open houses, surveys, questionnaires, and publications.”*

Planning staff created a schedule for public engagement which included an anticipated timeline, tasks and sub-tasks that were completed (Table 1). This schedule was presented and approved by the WHPAC in May 2018. The tasks and subtasks were completed by the Planning and Development Department staff with assistance from Committees, Councillors, and additional municipal staff as needed, however not within the anticipated timeline. Due to the consolidation with the Town of Windsor, the Plan Review timeline was adjusted to accommodate public information meetings about the consolidation. The first round of public engagement sessions for planning began in October 2018 and concluded in January 2020.

This “What We Heard” document was created to ensure accountability that the public comments have been heard. Amendments to the existing planning document will be drafted based on the comments received during the topic-based, location-based, and school engagement sessions. It is anticipated that planning staff will host location-based engagement sessions to gain input on draft policies in year 3 of the process instead of year 2.

**Table 1: Proposed Public Engagement Schedule**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Sub-Tasks</b>
<b>Summer</b>	Prepare material for engagement sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background reports</li> <li>• Location based</li> <li>• Schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create presentations</li> <li>• Produce hand-out material</li> <li>• Develop activities</li> <li>• Create questions to facilitate discussion</li> </ul>
	Create an online presence for the Plan Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create Plan Review email address for direct comments</li> <li>• Create webpage for Plan Review</li> <li>• Start an email / mailing list to inform residents</li> <li>• Develop a placed-based mapping comment system</li> <li>• Create a youth photo contest</li> </ul>
<b>Fall</b>	Plan engagement sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book venues and dates</li> <li>• Promote dates for engagement</li> </ul>
	Hold engagement sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background reports</li> <li>• Location based</li> <li>• Schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present to the public</li> <li>• Collect feedback from the public</li> <li>• Create online survey questions from engagement sessions</li> </ul>
	Develop a “What We Heard” report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect comments from each engagement session</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summarize comments in a “What We Heard” report</li> <li>Produce a quarterly report for mailing list to inform the public of our progress</li> </ul>
<b>Year 3</b>	Plan and hold engagement sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Location based</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take draft policies to the communities for additional suggestions</li> </ul>

### 3.1 Public Meeting Dates

Public meetings were created to discuss background report topics, and location-based items specific to the Growth Centre, Village and Hamlet designations, and the community of Hantsport. Table 2 outlines the dates of the Plan Review meetings that were approved by the WHPAC in September 2018.

**Table 2: Plan Review Meeting Schedule – Approved September 2018**

Meeting Topic	Date	Time	Location
Environment and Infrastructure	October 17	2:00 p.m.	Council Chambers
Growth Centre: Falmouth	October 24		Falmouth Community Hall
Growth Centre: Three Mile Plains	October 29		Three Mile Plains Community Hall
Summerville to Walton	November 5		
Avondale and the Burlington’s	November 7		
Ellershouse and Ardoise	November 19		
Mount Denson and Upper Falmouth	November 21		
Brooklyn, Newport Station and Newport Corner	November 28	6:00 p.m.	
Agriculture	January 14		
<i>Alternative Agriculture</i>	<i>(Storm Date)</i> January 21		
Hantsport	January 23		
Economic Development, Resource and Industry	January 29		
<i>Alternative Hantsport</i>	<i>(Storm Date)</i> January 30		

Due to consolidation meetings, the WHPAC recommended in October 2018 that the meetings that were not yet advertised be postponed until the new year. At the WHPAC meeting of February 2019, the Committee recommended that the schedule of public meetings be deferred until after the April 2019-2020 budget discussions. Table 3 shows the meetings that took place prior to budget discussions.

**Table 3: Plan Review Public Meetings Held Prior to April 2019/2020 Budget Discussions**

Meeting Topic	Date	Time	Location
Environment and Infrastructure	October 17	2:00 p.m.	Council Chambers
Growth Centre: Falmouth	October 24	6:00 p.m.	Falmouth Community Hall
Growth Centre: Three Mile Plains	October 29		Three Mile Plains Community Hall
Agriculture #1	January 14		Upper Burlington Community Hall
Agriculture #2	January 30		Windsor Forks District School

Following the April 2019/2020 budget discussions, WHPAC determined that staff could host the remaining Plan Review public meetings as follows in Table 4.

**Table 4: Updated Plan Review Meeting Schedule – July 2019**

Meeting Topic	Date	Time	Location
Economic Development, Resource and Industry	September 5	6:00 p.m.	Council Chambers
Environment and Infrastructure	September 12		Ellershouse Community Hall
Growth Centre: Three Mile Plains (District 6)	September 26		Three Mile Plains Community Hall
Mount Denson and Upper Falmouth (District 8)	October 3		Windsor Forks District School
Hantsport (District 10)	October 10		Hantsport Baptist Church
Summerville to Walton (District 1)	October 29		Kempt Shore United Church
Vaughan (District 7)	November 5		South West Fire Hall

Brooklyn, Newport Station and Newport Corner (District 5)	November 7	Brooklyn Fire Hall
Ellershouse and Ardoise (District 4)	November 14	Ellershouse Community Hall
Avondale and the Burlington's – cancelled due to weather	November 28	Avondale Community Hall
Avondale and the Burlington's (District 2 & 3)	January 23	Avondale Community Hall

## **Advertising**

The public meetings were advertised through a variety of means, including:

- ❖ Councillors, West Hants Planning Advisory Committee and Hantsport Area Advisory Committee members
- ❖ West Hants website (pinned to the homepage and on the Plan Review page)
- ❖ West Hants social media pages (i.e. Facebook, Twitter)
- ❖ ValleyEvents.ca page
- ❖ Plan Review mailing list
- ❖ Valley REN businesses (September dates)
- ❖ Local school newsletters (October and November dates)
- ❖ Hants Shore Community Health Centre (October and November dates)
- ❖ Hantsport meeting advertised on the HMCC sign
- ❖ Posters placed in a variety of locations throughout communities

### ***3.2 Youth Engagement Sessions***

Engagement sessions were held at Avon View High School and West Hants Middle School on November 5 and November 27, 2018 respectively. These sessions were used to inform youth about municipal government documents and processes, and to gain input on the Plan Review.

### ***3.3 Online Presence***

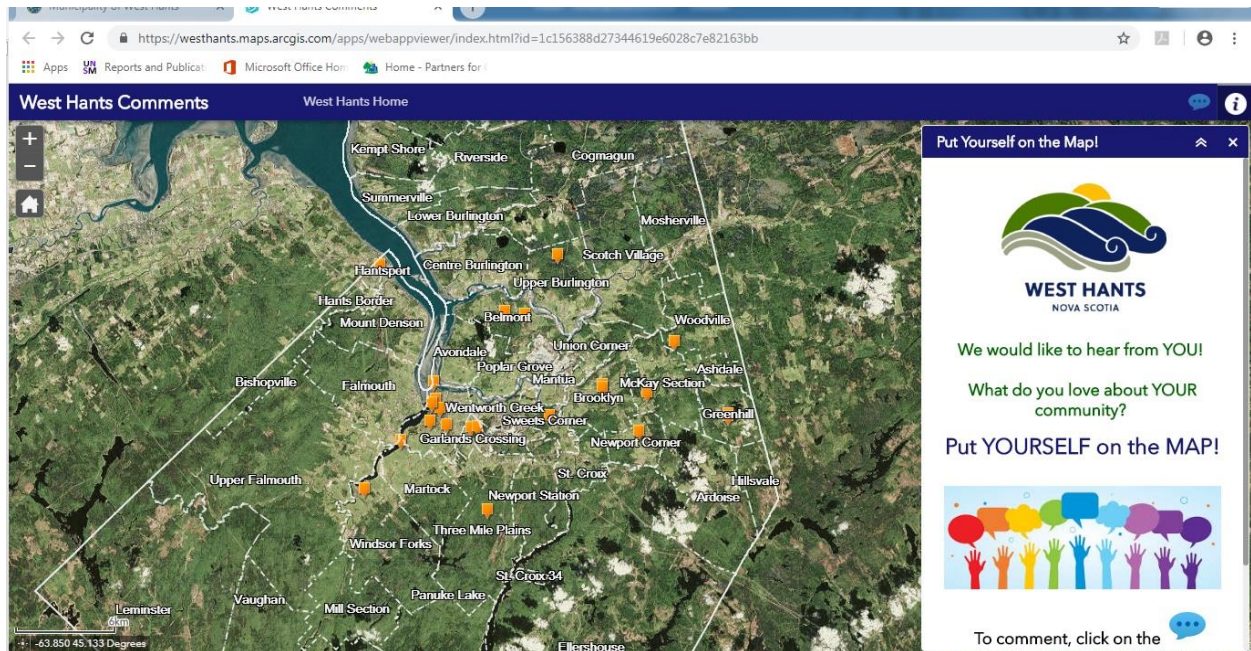
Throughout the public consultation period there was a strong online presence to inform residents of the review, advertise public engagement sessions, and allow residents to provide feedback via email, comment pages and/or topic-based surveys.

### ***3.4 Interactive Mapping***

The Planning and Development Department created two (2) interactive mapping tools. The first was the Land Use Survey map which showed the current land uses on each property and allowed the public to make comments if staff did not accurately determine the current use. The second was an interactive community map which allowed the public to leave a comment

on what they liked about their community, what could be improved and why they chose to live in West Hants (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Online Comment Map**



## 4.0 "What We Heard"

### 4.1 Public Meetings

The meetings began with a short introduction to Planning. There was an interactive mapping or drawing component followed by a group discussion. General group discussion was led by questions that staff had created prior to the meeting based on policies in that area. Meetings concluded with residents providing their final thoughts through exit surveys.

The exit surveys captured who attended the meetings and their final thoughts. In total 81 residents completed a survey including 21 farmers and 6 business owners. Most residents learned about the meetings from social media. Attendees appreciated the open discussion and informative conversation. The top comment for ways to improve the meetings was better attendance.

### TOPIC BASED MEETINGS

#### 4.1.1 Environment and Infrastructure

##### October 17, 2018

Five (5) people, including two (2) representatives from Nova Scotia Power, a local developer and two (2) members of the public attended. The participants listed their top environmental concerns as: the need to decrease GHG emissions (energy efficiency, reduction and renewables), the need to encourage better waste and resource management, the impact of the increase in storms, flooding and wind on infrastructure and potential water issues (i.e. finding clean water in the future may be challenging).

When asked what role the Municipality could take to encourage residents to reduce GHG emissions the attendees stated: encourage and educate residents on efficient solutions, fast-track building permit applications for energy efficient and environmentally friendly buildings (i.e. LEED or Low Impact Development) and make three-phase power mapping available on the Municipal website using Nova Scotia Power data.

Innovative options that the participants wanted the Municipality to consider included: rainwater harvesting for medium and high-density developments outside serviced areas, maximum requirements for parking instead of minimums, increasing the awareness of "renewable ready" locations, promoting density and linking the trails used for active transportation to any community transportation options.

##### September 12, 2019

A second meeting on the topic of Environment and Infrastructure was held with a total of nine (9) community members including the Warden in attendance. The participants listed their top environmental concerns: clean air and clean water, the impacts of climate change especially on coastal infrastructure and clear cutting. Participants suggested that the best way to offset the effects of climate change would be through carbon sequestering and protection of our forest resources.

When asked about energy production, participants stated that solar power has not been fully utilized and there could be incentives to help residents initially purchase solar panels for their homes. The participants also discussed the effects climate change has on coastal areas of the Municipality and asked that mapping on the flood risk be publicly available and easily digestible. Some participants suggested not allowing people to rebuild their homes or buildings if they keep being impacted by coastal flooding, however there was no discussion on what the setback from the coastline should be or how to implement and enforce it. There was also discussion on the environmental and sociological impacts of fracking for oil/gas.

#### **4.1.2 Agriculture**

##### **January 14, 2019**

The January 14 meeting regarding Agriculture in Upper Burlington attracted sixteen (16) residents and four (4) Councillors. Many attendees commented that farmers are feeling financial pressure and wish to diversify their products. It was suggested that the Municipality could investigate grants or incentives that are available to farmers to assist with making farming economically viable. There was other discussion about the need for a commercial kitchen for farmers to be able to produce products locally and a farmer's market to gain community support and intercept some of the traffic that goes to the Wolfville market. Other discussion included encouraging solar and wind energy production, but not biomass due to environmental concerns, and encouraging sustainable forest management practices including the prohibition of clear cutting.

In terms of planning-related items, residents felt positive about the current West Hants policies as they do not seem to be restricting how farmers and landowners are able to utilize their properties and diversify uses. The meeting also clarified which sustainable land practices and sustainable energy options the public may be interested in.

##### **January 30, 2019**

Twenty (20) residents and one (1) Councillor attended the second Agriculture meeting in Windsor Forks. Most attendees were interested in passing on their farms and agricultural land to family members when they retire. A comment was made that the key stakeholders were at this meeting and if they did not want to pass their land onto their family then farming would end in this community.

There was a difference of opinion from participants in terms of how restrictive zoning should be. Some suggested that profitability would protect agricultural land more than zoning ever could (i.e. if a farmer finds it profitable to farm, they will continue to do so; no zoning can encourage an increase in farming). An attendee suggested that the land trust system through the Annapolis Valley Land Trust group could be considered for the area. It uses conservation agreements with the landowners to ensure the land is preserved for agricultural purposes.

The main concerns of farmers in this area were: the proposed Windsor causeway design and how that could impact their farmland (i.e. the potential for irrigation issues and salt water intrusion), food security (export/import increases, wanting to sell to local market) and

pressures to sell land for non-agricultural use (the pricelessness of agricultural land is not reflected in sale or taxes).

The attendees also mentioned the need for society to appreciate farming in the area and stop paying for convenience at large grocery stores. There was discussion about Food Freedom Day (mid February), the day where most Canadians have made enough money to pay for their yearly food bill. The participants stated that farming does not only produce food and act as an economic generator for the region, it also provides the aesthetic look of the countryside.

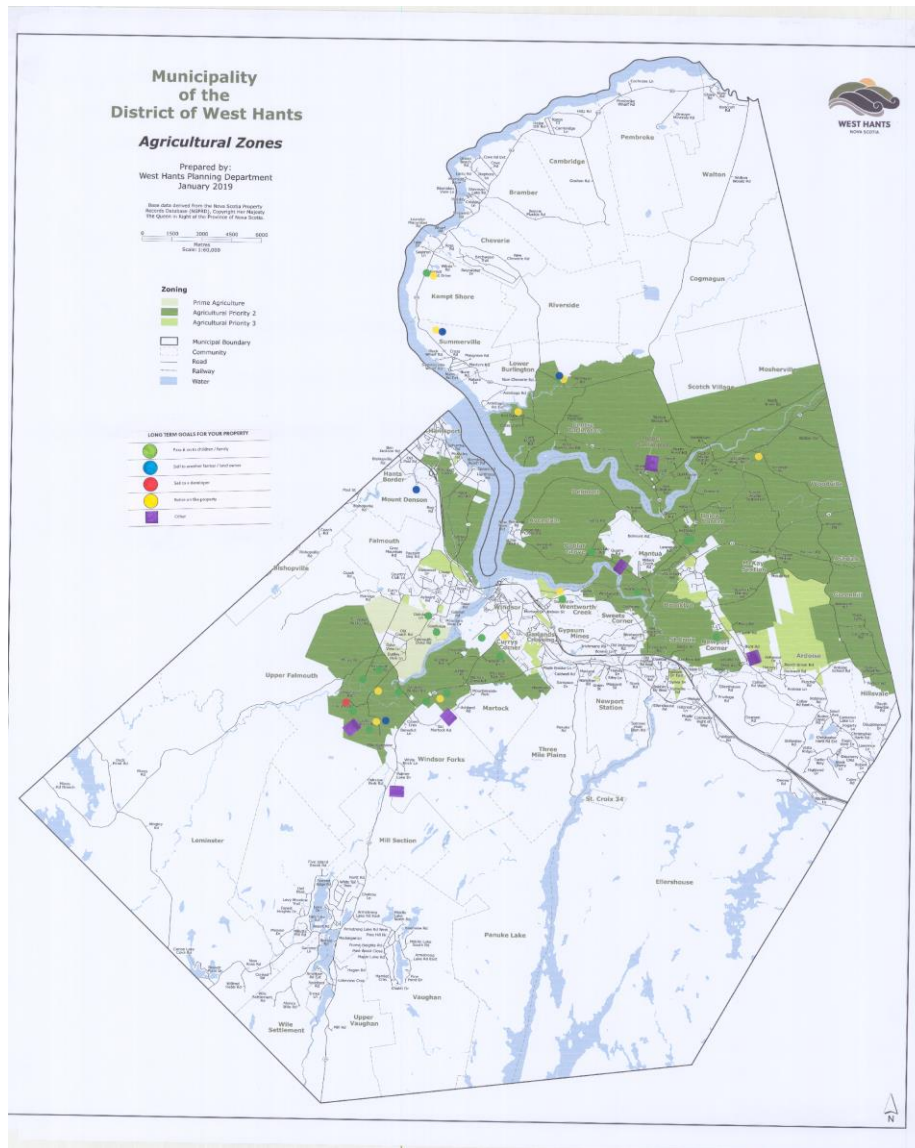
There was consensus from participants that the Prime Agriculture (P/Ag) Zone should remain. It was also mentioned that concentrated development in the Growth Centres complements the farms as residents then know where growth should occur, and it is difficult to use the agricultural land for uses other than agriculture.

Figure 4 shows the map that was displayed during both agriculture meetings. Staff asked participants what the long term (20+ years) intention for their property was (Table 5). The participants were asked to place a coloured dot on the map which symbolized their response.

**Table 5: Agricultural Property Owners Long Term Intention**

<b>Colour</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>
Green	Pass onto children / family	18
Blue	Sell to another farmer / land owner	3
Red	Sell to a developer	1
Yellow	Retire on the property	10
Purple	Other	6

**Figure 4: Agricultural Property Owners Long Term Intention Map**



### **4.1.3 Economic Development, Resource and Industry**

A meeting was held on September 5, 2019 to discuss policies related to economic development, resource and industry with local business owners and residents. Staff reached out to the Valley Regional Enterprise Network (REN) for business contact information. Businesses were contacted via email, posters were sent to local councillors and committee members, and were placed in the local post offices.

Four (4) members of the public, one (1) Councillor and the Economic Development Officer attended the meeting. When asked what makes West Hants unique from the rest of the Province, the respondents stated the natural environment, historical and cultural significance, the people and sense of community, and the prime location in relation to HRM, the Valley and Truro. Respondents stated they have seen growth in tourism related businesses and organic

agriculture. There was a consensus to encourage local businesses over chain businesses and respondents stated they could see potential business growth in Brooklyn, Summerville and Vaughan.

Some respondents were concerned that there may not be enough industrial space available in the Industrial Park for new businesses and that space should be identified for future expansion. When asked about home-based businesses, the respondents suggested that requirements such as parking should be relaxed for certain home-based businesses (i.e. those where there is no direct contact with customers such as online businesses).

There were major concerns regarding potential resource development such as forestry and oil/gas exploration, and the environmental impacts associated with these industries. The respondents stated that they would like to see policies created which encourage responsible and sustainable resource development, environmental stewardship and biodiversity preservation. Respondents also suggested more stringent criteria should be developed to evaluate applications for these businesses or industries when applying for a Land Use By-law amendment or development agreement.

## **LOCATION BASED MEETINGS**

### **4.1.4 Growth Centre: Falmouth**

Ten (10) members of the public, including the Warden and a WHPAC resident member attended the October 24, 2018 meeting in Falmouth. In general, residents felt Falmouth should encourage residential growth, encourage affordable rentals and be advertised as a good place for seniors and young families to live. Some respondents wanted to develop architectural standards to ensure new housing fits the look of the community. Others suggested that mini-homes remain in mini-home parks and not be permitted in the Single Unit Residential (R-1) Zone.

When asked about commercial development in Falmouth the participants stated that commercial areas should be small-scale and serve residents, not highway traffic. If commercial expansion is needed in the future, attendees suggested that it could occur along the old Highway 1. The respondents further reiterated that Falmouth is rural and should be considered rural in the planning documents. The final comments were to increase the green space and trail connections for residents as walking on the shoulder of the road can be dangerous.

### **4.1.5 Growth Centre: Three Mile Plains**

Both meetings scheduled in Three Mile Plains on October 29, 2018 and September 26, 2019 did not have any participants.

### **4.1.6 Mount Denson and Upper Falmouth**

The meeting scheduled for October 3, 2019 did not have any participants.

#### **4.1.7 Hantsport**

A meeting was held on October 10, 2019 in the community of Hantsport. There were eight (8) members of the public in attendance including three (3) Councillors. When the participants were asked to describe their community, they used word such as: family friendly, welcoming, walkable with recreational opportunities, safe, proud, industrial and historic. The participants stated that compared to other areas of the Municipality, the land uses in Hantsport are in well-defined areas. They also stated that they would like to see more businesses on Main Street.

Participants commented that they would like to see the community have everything residents need from cradle to grave including a bank, daycare, post office, fire department, commercial area, etc. Others commented that the industries within Hantsport are vital to the community well-being and if those industries closed Hantsport would become a bedroom community for Halifax. Further discussion encouraged leaving the policies in Hantsport open and vague to allow opportunities and encourage people to live there or start a business. Lastly, residents discussed the future possibilities for Hantsport and how to get more residents engaged.

#### **4.1.8 Summerville to Walton**

A meeting was held on October 29, 2019 to discuss planning policies related to the area from Summerville to Walton. There were ten (10) members of the public in attendance including one (1) Councillor. When asked to describe their community the attendees responded: rural, surrounded by farms, built by the tides, peaceful, beautiful and scenic. One resident described their community as the “end of the road” and added that it can be both a positive (i.e. fewer neighbours and more freedom) and a negative (i.e. potential for increased crime due to fewer police patrols).

Residents commented that attracting families and encouraging new doctors to move to the area is important for the long-term sustainability of the health centre. Additionally, everyone agreed that high speed internet and cell phone coverage is needed. There was a lot of discussion on the criteria used to evaluate planning applications and consensus that the planning department should host public information meetings where an application is being considered as most people will not travel to Windsor for a meeting if they live out near Walton or Upper Vaughan.

#### **4.1.9 Vaughan**

A total of fourteen (14) residents from the community of Vaughan attended the meeting held on November 5, 2019. When asked to describe their community the participants said: cottage living, peaceful, lake enjoyment, remote, and residential. The respondents commented that 20+ years from now they would hope this area is known for its pristine and healthy environment and as a recreation area with bicycle lanes and multi-use trails.

Many of the residents had concerns regarding livestock and its proximity to the lake, suggesting that new restrictions be put in place to regulate, enforce and maintain the quality of lake for all residents to enjoy. There was a suggestion that the area around the lakes in Vaughan be amended to a Hamlet or similar designation, as resource uses would not be compatible with the development in the area.

#### **4.1.10 Brooklyn, Newport Station and Newport Corner**

A meeting was held on November 7, 2019 at the Brooklyn Civic Centre which only two (2) members of the community attended. When attendees were asked to describe their community of Brooklyn they stated that it is a hub for rural communities in the area with lots of amenities such as the Green For Life (GFL) rink, fire department and schools. They also stated there is a strong volunteer base however it is a bedroom community for Halifax. The main topic for discussion in Brooklyn was the provision of services and potential land for future development. Services discussed include water and sewer, public transit, internet, and recreational facilities. If these services were provided the respondents believe Brooklyn would continue to thrive.

#### **4.1.11 Ellershouse and Ardoise**

A meeting was held on November 14, 2019 in Ellershouse to discuss planning policies for Ellershouse and Ardoise. There were ten (10) community members in attendance including one (1) Councillor. When asked to describe their community, the respondents stated that it is: friendly, close to the highway, has services such as the post office, store and community hall, and that it is transitioning into a bedroom community. However, they feel the community is welcoming to new residents. A few of the comments from the general discussion included concerns with clear cutting and minimizing impacts of resource and industrial uses on nearby residential uses.

#### **4.1.12 Avondale and the Burlington's**

A meeting was scheduled for November 28, 2019 however was postponed until January 23, 2020 due to weather, at which time twenty-three (23) members of the public attended including the Warden. Many residents described Avondale as friendly, peaceful, beautiful and quiet. Other words used to describe Avondale included historic and agricultural, the Avondale wharf and waterfront, and the diversity of farms in the community. The community had a strong vision for the future and in the next 20+ years they would like to see Avondale known as the festival hub of Nova Scotia, an example site for climate change mitigation / adaptation opportunities and increased local food production. Residents stated that there should be more attention paid to the environment including the St. Croix and Avondale rivers and to utilize local knowledge for education. There was some discussion about the water quality and supply in the area with residents stating that the gypsum in the area causes water to be extremely high in iron and other minerals. There was also discussion on the Avondale Wharf and the potential future uses for access to the river and the need for more stringent agricultural policies.

### ***4.2 Youth Engagement Sessions***

#### **4.2.1 Avon View High School**

Councillors and planning staff were invited to speak to the student council at Avon View High School during a one-hour lunch time meeting. Planning staff explained planning and introduced the students to the Plan Review interactive comment mapping available online,

which the students really enjoyed. Staff left the students a short survey to complete and asked them to analyze the results. However, the surveys were not submitted back to planning staff.

#### **4.2.2 West Hants Middle School**

Councillors and planning staff shared a four-hour interactive session with students from grade 6-8 in the PASTE (Physically Active, Ambassadors, Student motivators, Technology, Environment) leadership program at West Hants Middle School. During the session planning staff went through multiple activities with the students including interviewing, matching and mapping exercises to teach the students about planning. The interviewing activity asked the students questions such as *“What do you think the best place in West Hants is?”* to which the main responses were Ski Martock and the Newport District Arena. The activity also included what would be the first thing they would do to make West Hants a better place for young people if they were the Warden. The responses were varied but included banning smoking/vaping, providing free wi-fi everywhere and increasing recreation facilities including hockey arenas, sledding hills and parks.

### ***4.3 Online and Interactive Mapping***

#### **4.3.1 Land Use Survey**

The Land Use Survey map was developed to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the land uses determined by planning staff and correct misinterpretations. Only four (4) comments were received with minimal corrections. These comments have not been included in this report due to the specific nature of the comments and privacy concerns; required corrections will be considered during the document revision process.

#### **4.3.2 Online Comment Map**

The online comment map provided residents an opportunity to make general comments with prompting questions such as what do you love about your community, why do you live here, and what could be improved? The map was live between Fall 2018 to Winter 2019 and received 49 comments. During the youth engagement, students were able to add comments to the map which significantly increased the number of respondents. The top positive comments were the small town/rural feel, the variety of amenities and the close-knit friendly communities. Respondents felt there could be more businesses, community spaces/recreation sites, and the lack of sidewalks and traffic problems were a major concern. However, several respondents were happy with the way things are and would not make any major changes.

## 5.0 Appendices\*

### 5.1 Topic Based Meetings

#### Infrastructure and the Environment

Meeting #1  
October 17, 2018  
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

#### Top 3 Environmental Concerns

- Overall decrease in GHG emissions
  - Energy efficiency
  - Energy reduction
  - Energy renewables
- Waste management / reduction
- Resource management
- Increase in storms, flooding, wind, etc. results in power outages and affects other infrastructure – may be something that should be looked into in future building code
- Circular economy especially for water resources
- Future clean water issues – need to start rainwater harvesting, etc.
- Create neighbourhood's pedestrian friendly and non-Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emitting friendly
- Land use – encourage density as it is easier to service

#### Questions

##### Energy

1. **Currently our Municipal Planning Strategy only discusses wind turbines in terms of renewable energy. Are there other renewable energy sources we should be considering?**
  - Yes, solar and geothermal
  - There is a lot more planning involved for wind than solar
  - Community solar gardens on brownfield sites with large arrays could be seen in the future – they can be operated by a third-party
2. **Should the Municipality encourage it? Can the Municipality do more?**
  - The Municipality has to strike a balance between promoting renewable energy and enforcing the by-laws / development agreements. Take great care managing this balance, because if residents perceive a conflict that jeopardizes the enforcement, they will lose faith in the process and at best disengage or at worst appeal / protest.
  - These projects can be driven by the municipality and municipalities can also encourage community groups
  - The role the municipality can play is by enabling these uses through land use planning. Zoning should allow standalone solar arrays (land use planning enablement)

\*staff comments during the meeting are shown in purple

- Currently regulations from the government only allow a small amount of solar power to go back to the grid, therefore solar should be encouraged only for self- or community-generation. Not as a for-profit venture.
  - Currently no Nova Scotia Community Feed-in Tariff (COMFIT) program for solar
  - There is a community solar program run by the government currently in its second year
  - There are lucrative roles for municipalities to play in the conversion to clean energy systems left open because industry has failed to fill the market gap. Alternative Resource Energy Authority (AREA) exists because of this. Industry wanted to charge more for renewable energy than organizations thought was reasonable, so Berwick, Antigonish and Mahone Bay did it themselves (with some help!).
  - Find Leon in Bridgewater and chat with him about what municipalities can do
- 3. What role can the Municipality take to encourage residents to reduce GHG emissions? Are there strategies that could be incorporated into our planning documents to regulate GHG emission reductions?**
- 50% of the building stock in Nova Scotia still use fossil fuels. Encourage efficient electric solutions. It would cut down on GHG emissions and could save residents money over the long term
  - Municipality could educate the public about GHG emissions and different options to reduce their emissions
  - There are several programs that could be put in place such as fast-tracking building permit applications for energy efficient and environmentally friendly buildings
  - A Property Assessed Clean Energy Financing (PACE) program could be established to provide financing to residents for energy upgrades
  - Electric vehicle charging stations in new developments or make new buildings “renewable ready”
  - Electric vehicle buses are a pilot project, could be used for waste pickup trucks
  - In terms of infrastructure for renewable energy, brownfield sites could be a great resource to site the infrastructure
  - Make three-phase power mapping available through the Municipality from Nova Scotia (NS) Power. Certain uses need higher intensities of power and the planning department can use this information when considering permitted uses. Residents and business owners can be encouraged to tap into the already existing power and not have to endure the costs of creating new lines.
  - Municipalities have rock bottom cost of capital, but in order to access the municipal financing, the risk has to be eliminated. AREA worked with industry partners to achieve this so there is a track record. You could use this model and have the Municipality finance energy efficiency and solar thermal/ Photovoltaic (PV) systems. Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) did this, Bridgewater too. They would be helpful to speak with on concept. AREA can help with execution of the concept.
  - Leave this for the Feds/Province to settle because it is too complicated for a single municipal unit to do.
- 4. Is there red-tape preventing renewable energy?**
- Cost

- Work with the different stakeholders early on to avoid red-tape
- I have a friend in Wolfville who put solar panels in their backyard. There are no rules now, but I don't think I would want them any closer to my property. Maybe a setback similar to a garage of 6ft would be ok.
- Safety when it comes to solar panels is a concern. As it is such a new industry there are not a lot of standards for installation. NS Power inspects solar panels before they can be hooked up to the grid but if someone is using them just for their own property there is no one checking on them. Solar arrays should be installed by a red-seal certified professional.
- AREA went through the development agreement process twice with West Hants. Your entire organization and Council were awesome to deal with, and continue to be, and even helped us accelerate our plans. Honestly, I cannot think of anything you could do better.

## **Water and Climate Change**

### **1. *What strategies can a municipality implement to deal with climate change concerns?***

- Create projections for sea level rise and do not allow building in places where there will be flooding
- The Province is creating costal guidelines, but I think they will chicken out because there are expensive homes close to the coast.
- People shouldn't be allowed to rebuild after floods
- We can grandfather in what is there and put rules in for new things.
- Introduce setbacks from watercourses
- Building permits for new development should notify the applicant of the risks and not to build there
- Plan for stormwater runoff

### **2. *Low Impact Development (LID)– should the Municipality incentivize it, regulate it, or encourage it?***

- When people have the choice, they don't always choose to do the right thing
- **Incentivize – whether it be through a fee, tax or permitting process**
- LID strategies are usually market driven – stormwater management can benefit infrastructure and potential buyers appreciate the efforts
- Can developers do their own waste water projects? **Real constraints for this come from NS Environment as it approves wastewater collection systems**
- Can biosolids be used? **Restrictions on biosolids from septic systems being used on farms.** Could these restrictions be removed if the biosolids are clean and approved by NS Environment or another similar agency? Research has advanced and there may be ways to use it safely now.
- Recycle more plastics and reduce packaging! Could investigate ERP (Extended Producer Responsibility) program
- Find out what your largest emitters of garbage and recycling waste are and work with them to reduce
- The Municipality could provide information on energy use.
- Wastewater treatment is a big energy user - reduce water going through system

- Water and sewer extension – Highway 1 from Hantsport to Falmouth could be considered. Upgrade infrastructure and work with utility to ensure it is connected. There is a lot of development potential in that area.

### **3. Are there other innovative options to consider?**

- Low impact development impacts several aspects of climate change.
- Building code - minimums
  - The Municipality could create incentives to increase energy efficiency in buildings. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for commercial.
  - Check what Edmonton is going to incentivize homeowners to make these changes (Green Building Council presentation - Passive house incentives) and waste management practices
  - These changes could attract new businesses and funding to the area
- Waste technology, transportation, building, it all sets the bar higher and would attract business and residents.
- Circular economy for water resources
- West Hants should take advantage of the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions work already done in Bridgewater.
- Work on a project that the Province and Federal government don't cover. Get a seat at the table by being the first to make things happen.
- Rainwater harvesting requirements for medium- and high-density developments outside of the serviced areas. Forest Lakes will be the largest system in Canada for collecting rainwater.
- Parking – **the Municipality could create a maximum requirement rather than a minimum**
  - Could leave it to the developer to decide
  - Make requirements for commercial and institutional developments (i.e. daycare on Victoria Street in Windsor has limited parking which means people are blocking the street to pick up kids) or require a pickup and drop off zone
  - It is hard to force business to cooperate, but you can incentivise it.
- Pedestrian and biking infrastructure – trail systems for active transportation (rails to trails)
- Active transportation is key. Connecting trail systems to services will encourage use. Consolidation will help to connect services.
- The Municipality should think about how development works with community transportation. Possible park and ride along Highway 101
- Encourage bicycle tourism – create partnerships with breweries and wineries
- New builds – potential to add space for charging stations, especially for community facilities. The device may not be added but the wiring could be in place so it would be easy to add a charging station later on.
- It was brought up at a meeting that the arena in Brooklyn was a missed opportunity to incorporate solar and low impact development.
- Solar panels can be put over parking lots as a way of generating electricity and providing covered parking.
- Solar lights in areas
- Energy storage (residential to utility models)

- Wind speed in the Province has doubled in NS over the last 10 years. What are the implications to infrastructure?
- Trees in powerlines is a major concern. New subdivisions could dictate where trees are permitted and the types of trees.
- Municipality could notify residents, through permits or in Municipal Planning Strategy for criteria for larger developments, to use trees that will not need to be cut by NS Power to maintain the power lines
- Adaptation measures
- Promote density
- Awareness of “renewable ready” locations
- Energy capture from landfills
- Organizations can contact NS power to discuss options.

### **Plan Review Rapid Fire!**

After each Plan Review meeting, we will be posting a question or idea that came up during the discussion. Here is this week’s question:

*Which of the following would you like the Municipality to use to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions? (comment below)*

- A. Incentivise energy efficient buildings
- B. Enable community renewable power generation (i.e. solar gardens)
- C. Permit the use of brownfield sites for renewable energy projects
- D. Remove parking requirements for certain uses
- E. Other

*Responses:*

- E. Do like Halifax with their solar city and finance through the tax bill upgrade for solar hot water and solar heater of private home.
- A....though it would be good if we did them all.
- B
- B&C

## Infrastructure and the Environment

Meeting #2  
September 12, 2019  
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

### Top 3 Environmental Concerns

- Clean water and clean air
- Amount of water and protection of the water we have
- Accommodating sea level rise
- Coastal infrastructure (coastal zoning?)
- Carbon emissions (protecting our forests to mitigate the impact)
- Lack of urgency
- Lack of updated information
- Clear cutting
- Pellet (wood) exports
- Damage to biodiversity (herbicide spraying)
- Maintain rural environment
- Wind turbines (wildlife concerns) – need to look at the larger picture
- Controls on oil/gas/fracking/mining exploration (prevention)
- Need active and effective public consultation on environmental projects
- Contaminated / brownfield sites
- Illegal dumping and the pollution associated with that

### **In 20+ years from now what do you hope this area is known for?**

- Heritage tourism
- Organic agriculture
- Tourism
- Organic Farms
- Cultural activities
- An inclusive, affordable, sustainable, ecologically diverse place to live

### **Energy**

- Need affordable programs to make it possible to partake in solar program especially for farms to partake
- Think about how much fuel has been used in generators. Solar panels with storage would be a better option
- 150 W solar panel in boat which goes to 2.6 V golf cart batteries to an inverter; we want something similar for a house
- What are the environmental impacts of batteries / solar panels vs. the gas generator?  
Need more research into this
  - Solar panels remove the direct emissions from the individual house / area

- Any new homes being built should require (make mandatory) a source of renewable energy (i.e. solar vs. oil/gas) and good insulation – through changes to the NS Building Code
- Most of the energy from the sun is not being utilized
- Careful with wood burning (i.e. biomass)
  - Used downed trees / wood locally vs. chopping new trees
  - Utilize extra debris; don't travel huge distances to get it
  - Older people have trees that could be used, especially after storms
- Scale needs to be compatible with resource available; need a reliable source of material for biomass to be sustainable
- We should plant 2 trees for every 1 that is cut. Forest management should be responsible
- Think if the power source is renewable, oil/gas is not; forests are if gardened/managed well and the sun is
- Forestry industry – all for money; watch for mills expanding – too much export of materials
- Are there geothermal opportunities in West Hants? **There is geothermal being used in the industrial park at the municipal building and organic farms (greenhouses) that produce food all winter long. For greenhouses, this could increase food production.**
  - Need more information for residents to let them know if there are more options and how we can do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in this area
  - What is the lifespan of a geothermal unit? And the maintenance requirements? It may make them more intriguing than heat pumps as they are not maintenance free.
- I track energy consumption through power bills
- There should be more information on how to track energy consumption
- Solar panels on the Ellershouse Community hall produce \$700 worth of power every year – if it is not used it goes back into the grid. The panels can produce 4500W of energy during the best time of day. Need storage batteries to keep the energy within the building. We could invest a lot more in storage, but it would cost a lot of money.
- How do batteries get recycled at their end-of-life?
- Does Nova Scotia Power let you have a negative electric bill? No. It would make solar energy more attractive to businesses if they did.
- Electric cars – need a larger percentage of renewable energy powering the electric grid before it should be mass-adopted. Also, the lithium-ion batteries that are used in electric vehicles are flammable and can damage the ocean. Would electric vehicles be heavy enough for our driving conditions (i.e. highway driving and driving in the storms/snow)?
- Would a reduction in speed on the highway reduce emissions produced? Do you produce more emissions when driving faster?
- Transportation – I used to drive into Sackville and take the link bus to get to downtown Halifax. There should be a link bus from the carpool parking lots in West Hants – encourage car pooling, and park and ride. The railway closing down was a bad idea as rail is the cleanest form of ground transport and it would reduce the pressure to expand our highway systems if still available in this region (take freight on trains). There used to be 6

trains a day going through Ellershouse, 2 would be solely passenger and 4 would be a mix of passenger and freight.

- 20-25 cars used the park and ride facility in Ellershouse on a regular basis.

### Water and Climate Change

- Need publicly available, digestible information
  - Show the flood mapping from the National Disaster Mitigation Program on the interactive mapping as a layer
  - Go further to include information on how this may impact your daily life whether you live in the flooded area, travel through the area or live in the Municipality.
- Do insurance agents have mapping? Rates might increase if there is damage or could be in the future.
- Should make coastal information registered on the property for a lawyer to find when someone purchases the property. What happens for the person selling it? Potential issues when no one wants to buy it.
- Saint Mary University researchers' study on the Avon River estuary – they did a presentation in Windsor and shows if sea level rise overtopped the dykes most buildings would be under water
- Developers usually know the risks (i.e. infilling swamp land or building on sinkhole prone areas) – need regulations to prevent this
- Information is not enough; we need regulations to prevent and educate
- Don't allow them to keep rebuilding; make changes to the regulations while you can
- **Low Impact Development – incentivize, regulate and encourage it.** We want it all, all new development should be low impact. Would the costs of low impact outweigh the benefits for developers?
- There was flash flooding in this area last year. All the driveways were washed out. Several roads have large ditches because of the storm.
- Private roads are a bad type of infrastructure as residents expect services but it's not feasible to provide them
- Municipalities should get together to deal with issues such as the Tantramar marshes where the rail line and highway link Nova Scotia to the rest of Canada. If that lifeline floods, then Nova Scotia only has a 2-3 day supply of food for residents.
  - The Saxby gale of 1865 created this realization when flood waters overtopped the dykes. This storm was a reference point for the Province on what could happen in that area.
- Are there any reimbursement programs through any level of government that would pay people to move inland, away from the coastline? Examples of remote areas of Newfoundland that were almost being cut off from services
- If the dam ever gives way in St. Croix, there would be issues for residents and cause severe damage
- Disaster plans are inadequate everywhere, especially when communication lines don't work during major storms

- Disposal of water when used for fracking or other contamination is a major issue. Not allowed to put it through the treatment plants as they were not built to handle industrial wastewater and there is no guidance from the Province. Need to think about revisions to the sewer by-law to further restrict this in the future.
  - The wastewater can be disposed of in two ways: 1. Above ground tanks or 2. Injecting it back into the earth (which could lead to an increase likelihood of earthquakes in those areas; the Department of Environment currently doesn't allow it)
- Discuss the sociological impacts of fracking i.e. the effects it may have on the residents.
  - Dr. Wheelers presentation in Windsor was heated
  - Moratorium on fracking was never ratified by the Province.
- Climate change also has sociological impacts – continuous flooding of homes and livelihoods; there are both individual and community repercussions of that
- When upgrading sewer system at home – the old hand dug wells that were previously used needed to be filled in to meet the regulations of the Province, however now when the power goes out, they can't get water.
- Individuals are so powerless against industries

## Agriculture

Meeting #1

January 14, 2019

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

- Young people are looking to start farms here. We are close to HRM have excellent land, easy planning department to work with the future of agriculture is very positive.
- People are inquiring to real estate agents in the area for 10-15 acres for sale to farm.
- I started farming in the commodity era as a dairy producer. I can get pessimistic about the farming industry today. To be financially sustainable, we need to produce products as opposed to raw goods. The products can include dairy products like cheese, meat products such as sausages.
- We don't have large enough tracts of land available for large scale livestock operations anymore.
- A basic farm may have up to 60-80 animal units compared to farms in the US that have 500+ heads of cattle. It makes the NS farmers harder to get into the market.
- There is a real lack of infrastructure for processing products. Everything has to be sent away.
- Highest concentration of organic farming is in Hants county.
- **Why is that?** Organic farmers tend to settle around people that have similar values.
- Bill 177 provides opportunities for business owners to renovate their properties and get a tax break, but it only works in urban areas. Could we do something like that for farmers that want to renovate their barns?
- Farmers need help and they are being neglected by these Provincial programs.
- There are very few municipal programs for rural areas.
- **How many farmers in this room have wood lots?** It provides a valuable reusable resource for the farmer. We don't want wood lots to be clear cut because it impacts water, soil, and can provide a valuable carbon sink.
- Provincial government might be looking at carbon sinks to meet carbon reduction targets.
- Land is being abandoned and good land is becoming wild again.
- Farmers do want to retire and should be given the option to sell their land for financial resources.
- Incentives to farmers to keep agricultural land agricultural.
- Milk price is too low to make a profit because of trade deals.
- Is there a material that can be grown and would replace plastic? Hemp! Can't make money off hemp, need a LARGE acreage.
- There is no processing potential here, we have to ship goods to Ontario.
- At the provincial level they are always looking for processing opportunities, but farmers need to build the case for it.
- Agriculture has the climate, tourism, and potential to be the fastest growing industry in Nova Scotia.
- Dairy producers have been significantly decreasing.

- I've lost 18% of my potential income from the Harper era till now.
- The US has a different scale of producer that we can't compete with.
- If farmers could get a decent return on their investment, more people would stay on the land. We need to be able to process on farm to make the most money.
- What would increase return on investment? Having it processed here and getting a better price on products.
- There are very few municipalities giving money towards vibrant farmers market. It would provide an opportunity to grow the local market.
- When it comes to commercial business, they get incentives from governments, but farmers get road blocks.
- We need to scale up for farmers to be able to provide funds for initiatives.
- Farmers have to make money or the land will go to waste, if you can make money the land will be used.
- There is a window of opportunity for cannabis of about 1-2 years. We need to start planning by March to get into the market.
- The political government can take a long time to work out the details of licensees for cannabis.
- The Minister is focused on exports rather than imports. Having enough products to meet local demand is just as valuable as exports.
- Grants are great but we need systemic change. We need to reduce export and concentrate on our communities and their future.
- Wolfville farmers market 15 years ago was small but they have expanded and draw in a large demand from the Halifax crowd.
- We can build a better farmers market in Windsor.
- Weekly farmers market space for free use would be beneficial. It needs good signage and a bit of investment in the space. \$20,000 to \$30,000 from the Municipality would make a big difference in establishing a location.
- A lot of people want to buy local but its not always available in the volumes needed or a reliable place to buy it. It needs to be open on a regular basis.
- Lisa Hines from Agriculture society (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency study) has a business case for farmers market.
- There is not one professional commercial kitchen in the area that can be used by farmers to produce products. Brooklyn Civic Centre was approached by the Federation of Agriculture for the use of their new kitchen for something similar and there was no agreement.
- Most farmers do not want to put processing facilities on their farm. They would rather have one central location for a processing facility that can used cooperatively.
- We can go to Perennia (Truro) to develop some products but its an hour away. We need something local and accessible.
- Processing has to be owned by locals, so the products stay here rather than get exported out.

- **What do you consider a business compatible with farming?** Anything that sells equipment or services the needs of farmers.
- Farmers know their land, leave it to farmers to know the right location for new uses.
- The dairy industry consumes a lot of power but has the ability to provide power.
- Farmers are being paid to put solar panels on roofs or land that can't be cultivated in Europe.
- Solar panels on barns could bring in extra income. We have great solar and wind potential.
- Restaurants on farms provide a potential income source but there is often a lot of red tape with building codes that can be difficult to deal with. People are looking for "on-farm experiences"
- GHG emission funding could be used to focus on rural areas and farms.
- In Europe they don't build new buildings without solar, this should be the standard.
- There is a lot great potential with windmills, some areas in the states are covered with windmills. Their footprint is so small you can still use the land around it for agriculture.
- No stand-alone sites but in combination with agriculture wind and solar is okay.
- Not everyone wants to see a million windmills everywhere. I'd like to see more solar panels.
- Internet access for farmers is negatively impacting their business potential.
- Entire subdivisions in Calgary have solar panels on every roof purchased from NuAir in the Windsor-West Hants Industrial Park. The Municipality could develop a partnership with NuAir for farmers to receive solar panels at an affordable rate or create a payment plan.
- Are solar panel funding programs available? **Yes, the Town of Bridgewater and Halifax have created a funding programs to cover the initial costs of solar panels and than add it to taxes over 10 years. Other programs available through NS Power and Efficiency NS.**
- **Do you have concerns about protecting agricultural land?** The problem with protecting certain land for "agriculture" is that it may sit and grow alder bushes and then become unfarmable anyways. No net loss of farmland is hard to accomplish.
- Developers need to be controlled not farmers.
- If you want to protect agricultural land, you need to make money from the land.
- I would be concerned if I sold my valuable agricultural land and the new owner wanted to use it for housing, but you need the money sometimes.
- **Land trusts in Kings (Annapolis) is a strategy for protecting agricultural land. An easement is applied to the land that prevents it from being used for anything other than agriculture and you receive a tax credit. Its only useful if there is a mechanism to buy development rights. Encourage farmers to participate.**
- Most of the Municipality is zoned General Resource and you can still farm there.
- Statement of Provincial Interest was redeveloped (~ 6 years ago) by Department of Agriculture but then suggested changes were dropped. It should be looked at again because it talked about class 4 land.

- Forestry should be considered in combination with agriculture. Clear cutting is a major concern.
- Wild produce found in forests (i.e. mushrooms, truffles, etc.) can create more value than cultivation of wood.
- Runoff from clear cutting is immense. Carbon credits would be a good idea to support forestry. We should support sustainable forest practices and not encourage/allow clear cutting.
- Have staff looked into the land that is zoned Agriculture versus the land which is active farmland? **Yes, in the Agriculture Background report there is a comparison. Significantly more land zoned Agriculture than farmed.**
- You must be cautious about biomass. It was designated as “carbon-neutral” however they are not checking the carbon produced when cutting the trees or burning them for biomass. It should not be allowed/encouraged.
- We do not want to hear complaints (re: sounds and smells) from people that move to farm communities. The Farm Protection Act is effective but time-consuming process.
- The Department of Agriculture has funding available if farmers wish to export but it doesn't help those wanting to produce local for locals.
- Department of Agriculture also has land use reports (Williams Report (2010)) and has a Land Trust Working Group
- Are there any programs that can bring farmers together to build processing facilities? Nova Scotia has lots of co-operatives, but they often fall apart due to competition, management, and conflicts. However, if it was profitable it would work.
- The dairy industry as Agopur dairy cooperative which is controlled by dairy farmers for dairy farmers. We have a funding problem when it comes to establishing large processing facilities.

#### **Take away's**

- Need grants or incentives for farmers to make money
- Need a commercial kitchen and farmers market to gain local community support
- Encourage solar and wind energy production; DO NOT encourage biomass or clear cutting.
- Encourage sustainable forest management practices

## Agriculture

Meeting #2

January 30, 2019

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

- A heavy interest was shown for passing farms onto family
- You've got the key stakeholders in the room right now, if they don't want to pass it on farming will end in this community
- Farming has become more specialized
- Its difficult to expand the business when there isn't a lot of land available
- The farmland here will be used
- Most people have large farms here - smaller farms are in Burlington
- Farming has diversified a lot
- There is a difference of opinion in terms of how restrictive zoning should be
- Worry surrounding loss of farmland through aboiteau situation (issues with irrigation and saltwater penetration), food security (export/import price increases, want to sell to local market) and pressures to sell land to non-agricultural use (agricultural land value not reflected in sale or taxes)
- The Windsor causeway could be a major issue for farms in this area
- Large percentage of land would not be farmable if they allowed saltwater to flow through
- If it was a free flow from the causeway that would impact farming
- If your financial assets are lost it reduces your opportunity for growth, some people would loose 10% of their land
- We could lose the ability to irrigate land and freshwater access
- There are crops that we could not diversify if we don't have access to water
- Restricted flow can still have an impact and that is a huge concern
- Because the Municipal Planning Strategy allows for agri-tourism developments by development agreement in P/Ag (\*\*agritourism is not permitted but small-scale commercial is) the entire strategy does not have to change for one new business – it is treated as a case by case basis
- It opens up a can of worms when you talk about protecting agricultural land with zoning, I don't think that's fair
- I might not have the desire to develop non-farm uses but the fact that I can't decreases my property value
- Profitability will protect agricultural land – if farmers find it profitable to farm, they will continue to do so – no zoning can do that
- Kings County has a land trust system that would be a good idea here
- You can buy development rights in several states (Connecticut) and the UK to protect agricultural land while making a profit
- It makes up for that loss in value caused by restrictive zoning
- You can only sell development rights once (it's a one-time deal) but if that keeps you viable during a hard time or allows you to invest in your business, it solves many problems

- The landowner pays the price for restrictive zoning – it is only the farmer that sees the lower assessed value for farmland compared to a lot that would be able to develop houses or businesses
- Society should buy into agriculture
- Cost input high – low output cost (our food in stores is so cheap in Canada)
- Food Freedom Day (mid February) - when most Canadians have made enough money to pay for their yearly food bill
- People pay more for convenience
- It has to change in the whole community to make it work
- We don't think long term with our food
- They have restrictive agricultural zoning in other parts of Canada, but it encourages international investment
- A lot of dairy in this area is sold locally (Maritimes) or at least within Canada; Apples and horticulture are exported
- A change in government could result in taxes for farmers, we are concerned about this
- Farming is a lifestyle in West Hants
- People buy property and just let it sit but benefit from the tax break, this is wasting valuable agricultural land - they should pay tax on it (specific example in Avondale where people bought land there due to the Winery being in proximity and then haven't farmed it)
- Farming makes this area desirable for people that want the rural lifestyle but then complain about the smells and sounds of farming
- Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) can reassess a property that is not actively farmed on a regular basis to prevent people from holding onto agricultural land and not using it. It's done in Pictou county and Cape Breton.
- Does the Province still pay a grant to Municipalities in lieu of the taxes municipalities do not get from farmland?
- We produce food and are an economic generator for the region. We provide the aesthetic look of the countryside.
- Farming is important to the community not just those that own land.
- You'd be hard pressed to find farmers that don't impact the community.
- We are not close to the definition of large in comparison to other areas in Canada. Nova Scotia farms are small scale, no one has more than 50 employees.
- Every dollar a farmer spends in the community contributes to 7 dollars staying within the community.
- Most land is actively farmed which actually increases property values because its hard to find available land. Once a property does come up for sale you take your chance because it only happens once in a lifetime. The land prices usually skyrocket due to demand – there is no more farmland available in this area.
- Does the Prime Agriculture (P/Ag) zoning change the appraisal value of land? Relative to production value?

***Prime Agricultural (P-Ag) Zoning - why was it created, is it still necessary?***

- In 2008 there was development pressure seen on Redden Road (on Marshland) – there were also high-profile court cases ongoing with the Farm Practices Board
- On the other side of the river there was development pressure that encouraged the creation of the Prime Agricultural (P-Ag) Zone.
- It was zoned Prime Agricultural (P-Ag) before the Marsh Act. It created a clear boundary to protect the land
- Some farmers had land upland of the P-Ag zone which meant they did not take a complete hit
- We want you to leave it the same as it has been, it's worked all this time why change it?
- I don't see a benefit to relaxing the regulations
- We felt the pressure from developers like a slow creep
- *Is there anywhere now that is feeling that pressure?* Avondale
- It would be nice if the demand was coming from the agricultural industry not from residents wanting agriculture land to live on
- I know you have to protect land through zoning to meet the Provincial Statement of Interest, but there is no economic policy to back up the requirement
- We pay a parkland tax for new lots when subdivided, it would be nice to have a credit for parkland going to farms which provide nice views, landscapes, and public access to greenspace.
- The Federation of Agriculture could develop covenants that would raise the value of farmland
- Talk to the Farm Loan Board re: appraisals of farmland
- There are programs that allow some development, but a certain portion of land has to be set aside for agriculture. We could rent 2/3 of the property to a farmer that can't afford their own land and develop 1/3 of the land for residential uses.

### **Renewable Energy**

- If NS Power would buy the power that we generate back, then we would be interested but they are not willing to
- I would like to produce renewable energy, but I want to get paid for it
- It not financially viable for producing just for our own needs
- In Germany every roof has solar panels
- Its not economical viable for us to do it. We had programs in NS but most ended.
- If the Municipality wanted to top up the amount, we would make on energy production then it would be worth while
- In the Marsh Act you cannot put wind turbines there however roads are permitted to access them
- Methane digestors were build when the price of energy was high. We don't produce enough manure for methane to be generated (unless topped up by fryer grease)
- There is a ripple effect from agricultural zoning impacting infrastructure development
- It is easier to allow development in lower Falmouth
- Growth areas and density actually help the farming community and protects farmland
- It complements the farms to have concentrated development

- Are permissions for cannabis being considered?

## Economic Development, Resource and Industry

September 5, 2019

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

- Gypsum company – do they have an agreement on the land to remediate once they move out?
- Has an inventory of contaminated sites been completed?

### ***What makes West Hants unique from the rest of the Province?***

- Windsor – hustle and bustle, events and businesses
- Scenery along the 215
- Industrial activities that are no longer here – brownfield sites
- Tides
- Flying Apron (has connection to the Burnt Coat Municipal Park in East Hants)
- The people
- Connections to tides and rivers
- Awareness about communities
- Proximity to HRM, Valley, Truro - ideal positioning
- Quarry to go swimming – private, gem of this area
- Historical / culture context – ship building, historical properties, Fort Edward, birthplace of hockey, First Nations etc.
- Community theatre groups and volunteer / community led events
- Passionate volunteers
- Need to get the word out and let people know the culture
- South of Hantsport – Acadians would settle beside the tidal river – they may have a competing presence on the scale or greater than that of Grand Pre – may need land acquisition to think about the tourism possibilities associated with this

### ***What industries / businesses have you seen growth in?***

- Tourism (festivals and nature/trails)
- Agriculture, especially organic agriculture
- Cultural history is an industry
- Equestrian industry – clean land use – agriculture– the Windsor Exhibition
  - Although the horse industry may be going through a generational change as a lot of horse farms in the area are for sale
- Organic food industry
- Avon Valley floral – consistent – grow more here (outdoors) instead of bringing the flowers in from away. Although it may be cheaper to buy elsewhere. The quality is better when grown outdoors and there is an opportunity here; low margin industry; a “nice” industry. [A not nice industry was described as fracking or car wrecking yard on Dill Road].
- The economic development strategy identified three main industries for growth in this area including: high value agriculture, medicinal, clean technology. Need to find a need for high value agriculture. High value agriculture can be trendy but need to have a business plan for it.

- Tourist accommodations – growth in small scale (Airbnb and Rent by Owner) – type accommodations. It seems a need is being met

***Are there any business opportunities that have not been fully realized in this area?***

- Airbnb – most were open to the idea as it could encourage residents to renovate older houses in the Town(s)
  - Long term care greater need than Airbnb and older homes are not always suitable for seniors and their needs
- Affordable housing
- Public Access to the beach (Tourism) – tourists think Card Beach Road has beach access, but it was actually where the old ferry came in (historical connection)
  - Wayfinding
  - The Municipality could enter into agreements with landowners to let people cross their land to get to the beach; or purchase the land (Cheverie) – instead of boom, bust, decay cycle
  - Some subdivisions have agreements where they must keep public access to the beach - however, should we be spending time on this when the sea level is going to rise and cause issues? Need updated projections and discuss the impacts that climate change has on the coastline (i.e. erosion, decay, etc.)
  - Something dynamic with no hard infrastructure (i.e. no stairs or boardwalks along the beach) so it does not feel the impacts of climate change as much
  - During the elections there were a lot of homeowners who were concerned with losing access to the water
  - The Municipality owns land north of Bramber – potential to build a parking lot for people to access the water and have signage for people to get there – it was identified in the Open Space Plan by Recreation 5-6 years ago
- Stripped Bass fishing is growing – fishers could be allowed to cross farmers fields with permission

**Commercial Development**

***Are there communities in West Hants that you think businesses can / will grow? Why?***

- Brooklyn, Summerville, Vaughans crossroads
- Local and tourist services
- Need restaurant options other than the Flying Apron in Summerville – something open different hours
  - Family diner – homemade items
  - Would also appeal to contractors working nearby
  - Provide a place for seniors to socialize with reasonable process
- Hantsport – Tim Hortons closed which could be okay if more local businesses fill its place
- Want local businesses not chain stores
- Walton could encourage local commercial as well (even though it's outside of WH)

***Does West Hants have enough commercial and / or industrial spaces for businesses currently? For the next 10-20 years?***

- Some Councillors suggests there is not enough land in the Industrial Park – currently the park is full – need to identify space for future expansion
  - Example can be seen in the Industrial Park near Mount Uniacke

- Parking requirements – need more parking if increasing development especially industrial
- Behind the fire hall in Three Mile Plains (Brooklyn sub station) – owned by the Municipality, could be used to expand the industrial park
- How much land will the new highway “sterilize” during construction? Farmland being taken and now unusable because of slopes and changes in the landscape.
- Falmouth – Agricultural land – Prime Agricultural restrictions – soil testing required

***Are there adequate resources available to assist local small businesses and start ups in this area? What resources are they looking for?***

- Board of trade and RDA (Hants Regional Development Authority) disbanded or moved to Kings
- Valley Regional Enterprise Network has a business expo coming up and meetings to get input on marketing this area to businesses
- Community Business Development Corporation (CBDC) – Windsor mall location – offers business loans for start ups, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) and Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI)
- Need advertising of all the services - Need a unified voice for the businesses
- Downtown Windsor Merchant Business Association – Three Mile Plains, Falmouth and Hantsport have all been interested in something similar
  - This would help replace chain businesses with local businesses and make them successful
- Board of Trade in Windsor is no longer around although it was one of the oldest in North America (might be generational change)
- Excitement follows new businesses – must get over the bitter closures (i.e. Scotiabank and Tim Hortons pulling out of Hantsport)
- Evangaline Trail Association was great - it covered West Hants to the Valley
- Business associations are usually set up on volunteer-based model with no source of funding for staff (staff are essential) – could be set up with a different structure such as fee based, donation based, tax based, etc.
- Co-ops not used enough anymore

***Home Based Businesses (HBB)***

- Hair cutting, dog grooming, massage therapy
  - Those businesses wouldn't likely expand to full commercial operations as they don't have the population to support them
- **There is existing policy for parking requirements**
  - Parking requirements can be a barrier if required for certain businesses
- Barriers – general store in Centre Burlington example “I'd like to run the store there but all I see are barriers” – need specific repairs or additions to meet building code that cost too much to make it worth while
  - If a business builds on the character, history of the area then it should be okay to permit or relax requirements
- Three types of HBB:
  - No public engagement i.e. painter online

- Public drop off i.e. day care or dog sitter
- Customer stays i.e. hairdresser, barber, massage therapist
- Building Code – Can get in the way of development and act as a barrier
  - Could ask for relaxed regulations
  - Example – light manufacturing with equipment and not the 6ft roof height but has 5 ft height (regulations should be able to be relaxed)
  - Should a mechanism be in place for alternative / flexibility?
  - Amendments for washrooms were approved for home-based businesses based on Lunenburg case
  - We choose to adopt the National Building Code as a Municipality – we should be able to make changes
- Good internet needed

### **Resource and Industry**

- Forestry a major concern over the next 5 years - we have to plant and conserve 5 Million trees
  - Opinions expressed regarding clear cutting as it speeds up climate change
- Provincial (Ivany Report) three methods: 1. Conservation, 2. Selective, 3. Clear cutting – where environmentally feasible with natural regeneration. Option 3 doesn't ruin the land on smaller lots
- It is easier to restrict clear cutting on public land but harder on private as the only option is to encourage not regulate
- Municipal Climate Change Action Plan Committee wrote a letter to the Province in favour of the report
- We could encourage sustainable forest management practices and/or assist the aging woodlot owners by starting a program where owners could have experienced workers with equipment come in to help (i.e. show them how to sustainably manage their forests)
- We could incentivise responsible management
- Department of Forestry – listing what should and shouldn't be done but wording like "encouraged" is used to say it is not going to be enforced
- Annapolis County example / precedent on Forest Management and clear cutting (look it up)
- Impact all residents in WH – climate change will have even bigger impacts on this area if clear cutting isn't addressed
- Leads back to the conversation on clean tech – could hemp be used to alleviate some of the pressure for wood products / act as a replacement – education would be required
  - Small manufacturers (i.e. hemp-based bags instead of plastic)
  - How to fertilize hemp? Same as other crops and use on a crop rotation (i.e. corn for two years, hemp for one, then rotate).
  - Gypsum could be used as a fertilizer

### ***How do we encourage young people and families to stay here?***

- Families are already coming
- Affordable housing
- Cluster development with duplex and multiple unit

- Box car development similar to Wolfville and allowing tiny homes (building code changes)
- Rural transportation options to Sackville (Connections to services)
- Water and sewer servicing (expansion)
- Keep the rural / semi-rural schools
- Taxes (reduce – area rates can hinder things)
- 15% HST on a new house is ridiculous
- Allowing day cares
- The dog park in Hantsport brought in a lot of people

**Positive draws to the area?**

- Health clinic on the shore (Hants Shore)
- Access to open space and recreation sites (i.e. golf, martock, etc.)
- Financial institutions
- Schools
- Beautiful / unspoiled / uncrowded
- Entice immigrants to the area
- Churches – keep community connection – evolving

**Other items**

- Fracking
  - By-law in Inverness restricting fracking – do we need to go that far?
  - We need to outline our values and goals against this
  - Can the MPS be used as a mechanism to create a policy to restrict fracking?
  - Madelyn has mentioned before that we have no jurisdiction on below ground items
  - Can we take the stance of not encouraging industries that may affect water quality, etc.? Connect it to Statements of Provincial Interest?
  - We need a firm stance with a barrier
  - We also need to be consistent with the MGA
  - Create a policy “we support sustainable resource development, environmental stewardship and biodiversity”
    - Create a policy that is supportive of the opposite of fracking, instead of outright banning fracking
    - Uranium all over WH which could cause “technologically enhanced norms” radiation? and gypsum which could create sinkholes if fracking is allowed
    - Say no to nuclear power not just fracking
  - Example of Husdon, Quebec where the municipal laws actually stopped the spray of herbicide which was allowed by the Province based on core values
  - Core principle of “environmental stewardship”
- Haliburton project near Walton brought up the concern with how applications are evaluated (i.e. the criteria needs to change)
  - Create more long-term consideration in the criteria instead of short term
  - Public frustration – what could be possible in the future?

- Future risks need to be identified
  - Public health criteria?
- Rural transportation issues – consider industrial uses in rural areas by Development Agreement instead of rezoning to restrict traffic times (where enforceable)
  - CKF in Hantsport / Sustainable Blue in Centre Burlington/ landfill – have a lot of traffic associated with them
- Do we know where the income of our residents come from? i.e. percent of commuters versus working in West Hants
- We need a coordinated approach to development (i.e. hard to know where to identify with when we are part of the Valley Regional School Board, Cobequid and District Health Authority, Kings waste management, etc.)

## 5.2 Location Based Meetings

### Growth Centre: Falmouth

October 24, 2018

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

#### Questions

##### Residential

1. ***Do you agree that new development in Falmouth should be mainly residential?***
  - Mainly residential growth
  - Falmouth should be residential and its currently mostly residential now.
  - Falmouth is a beautiful residential area. The woods and trees are great. People are moving here. It's a well-spoken of community. Its known for being quiet.
  - Falmouth should remain a mainly residential community
  - I work in New Minas and people ask where I live. When I say Falmouth, they say lucky you for being in Falmouth.
  - Keep Falmouth residential – strength of the area
2. ***Should all residential development in Falmouth be single detached? Are you opposed to two-unit, mini homes or multiple unit dwellings?***
  - I am fine with small apartments of one to two stories.
  - Small apartment buildings (2-3 storeys) could be okay
  - Two-unit dwellings can be great starter homes.
  - Providing a variety of residential would bring in more families
  - Criteria for apartments: people don't want square boxes, they should be accessible, it should look like the houses nearby.
  - Is anyone upset about the Elms? It services the community and a great asset
  - Single family dwellings with in-law suite – is it permitted? They shouldn't count as in-law suites if they aren't related.
  - Apartments could be accessible for seniors
  - Need places for the workers for surrounding businesses including Windsor Elms
  - Apartments need to fit into the community, or it won't be welcome.
  - The look of the apartment buildings should be aesthetically pleasing possibly introduce architectural guidelines
  - Cost-effective for families and aging population – row houses, townhomes
  - It would be nice to have affordable options for new residents.
  - I would love to see townhomes for young families.
  - I don't want to overregulate.
  - Do not put too many restrictions in though (i.e. how many vehicles can park outside, etc.)
  - Encourage mix-uses - with senior's homes allow a pharmacy or a post office and green space
3. ***Do you think residents should have an opportunity to comment on proposed two-unit and multiple unit dwellings even if the process takes a long time? (two-unit permitted by rezoning / Multi-unit by DA)***

- Two Unit Residential (R-2) zoning – simplify the process to allow 2-unit dwellings – shouldn't be a rezoning (4-6-month process) but could just notify the neighbours
- Be more cautious about multi-unit (i.e. over 4 units) – more units should need more input
- **Apply Two Unit Residential (R-2) Zone everywhere in Falmouth?** No, density would grow too fast – duplexes would be put in everywhere
- Multi-unit should be considered by schools
- The ball field off of Town Road (currently zoned Open Space) should be used for apartments, however some people have an issue because it is community open space
- It depends on the style and look of multi units.
- Don't eliminate Two Unit Residential (R-2) but notify neighbours nearby if a new one is going in
- 300-meter process for just neighbours being notified

**4. How do you feel about basement apartments or granny suites?**

- Gabriel Road apartments? In-law suites (duplex)
- Basements apartments or garage conversions?
- No problem with garage conversions into a second unit
- There is nothing wrong with having apartments in homes but what happens if a person owns a home and rents out the dwelling and the accessory apartment? It then becomes an apartment house? **Planners can't regulate ownership**
- Is 700 sq. ft enough for an accessory apartment? People at the trucking school in Falmouth could use it, it could be additional income for a family, and seniors could get more affordable housing

**5. What do you think about mobile or mini-home home parks? (only permitted by DA, is this reasonable?)**

- No issue but should be in a park as it takes away from the feel of the community if next door
- The newer mini-homes are nice and have come a long way in style and appearance
- But they could take away from the value of adjacent homes
- People are going to trucking school. Seniors could get extra income by renting out the apartment.
- Mobile homes don't bother me, maybe change the name to tiny homes
- The style of mobile homes has changes quite a bit. They are a lot better now.
- If mobile homes could go anywhere, you'd want to have a limit on their age

**6. How do you feel about small two- or three-storey multi-unit buildings in the Commercial Core of Falmouth? Or commercial on the first floor and residential apartments above?**

- Provides living options for people without cars
- Commercial with residential close to services
- I think there should be living options in commercial areas. Commercial on the bottom and residential on top. The commercial core would be a good place to put them.

**Commercial**

**1. Is this enough land for commercial development? Should it be restricted or expanded?**

- No drastic changes from commercial

- Climate change will restrict development
  - We could increase commercial development along highway 1.
2. ***Are the commercial areas trying to be more of a “Highway Commercial feel” or “small-town rural feel”?***
- Commercial should service the residents of Falmouth – not highway traffic - Most people drive right through to New Minas
  - We should prevent development that doesn’t fit with the feel of the community.
  - Commercial should fit with the “feel of the community”
  - “Feel of the community” includes home, family, people knowing their neighbours, convenient stores, agriculture, jam sessions at the community hall, festivals
  - We don’t want big box retailers. We want mom and pop stores. Rather than retail, we want stores that cover our everyday needs. If you want commercial go to Windsor or Three Mile Plains. We don’t want retail here.
  - We don’t want a mini-mall in Falmouth.
3. ***Do you agree with allowing commercial development by DA outside of the Commercial Core (i.e. Falmouth Dyke Road)?***
- Even if someone wants to do a rezoning outside of the commercial area they will just apply and get it.
  - I know of an autobody repair business that has been there for decades and I am fine with that.
  - I think it makes a big difference if the house is occupied. I would prefer for a business to be in a house with people living in rather than an empty building.
  - I think it’s beneficial for the community to have small business in houses. We could have doctors’ offices within walking distance.
  - The group was split on home bases business or stand-alone business in residential areas.
  - We don’t want to turn away business. I’d rather be flexible.
  - I am fine with both residential and commercial business. We could have little business that are not an eye sore like a day care in the house. As long as nothing on the outside of the house changes, I would be fine with it.
  - Should buildings that close after a certain time of day be allowed in residential neighbourhoods? Changes the feel of the community
  - Make sure they are smaller and service the local community (i.e. dentist, accounting, auto repair, etc.) but don’t limit too much
  - Home based businesses more encouraged so people are in the houses once the business closes for the day
  - Split on commercial being allowed as long as it services the community versus making sure business owners live on the same property so it doesn’t change the feel of the community
  - People don’t like change – make sure business owners know they can still come here and that current businesses aren’t going to be forced to close – need good communication

#### **Miscellaneous**

1. ***The current MPS document states that Growth Centres are intended to accommodate most of the future non-rural development however Falmouth’s specific goal is to allow***

**development that maintains the "quiet, rural atmosphere". These statements contradict each other. What does the community want/feel?**

- Falmouth is RURAL and residents want it to stay that way
- Keep the farmland and zoned Agriculture land
- We think Falmouth is rural. The rural atmosphere means farmland and cattle.
- People from the city move here and sometimes have an issue with the farm smell.
- Farms were there first

**2. Does the community consider themselves "rural" or "suburban"?**

- RURAL

**3. What do you think about creating a more walkable community that is connected to the key services in Windsor?**

- Green space next to neighbourhoods would be great. There are not any trail networks.
- Its not safe to walk on the roads now. We need wider shoulders or maybe speed bumps.
- Trails - none in Falmouth, except the Laurie Saunier trail by Ducks Unlimited land
- More cycling would be good.
- Road speeds are set at 50 km/h however there is still a lot of speeding
- Dyke Road – walkers everyday even though there is high traffic
- It would be nice to have a walking trail in your community. I see at least 20 walkers during the week and 30 or more on the weekends.
- There are bike races through Falmouth.
- You can't get to the commercial by walking; it would be nice if that was an option.
- The railroad tracks should be converted to trails – not sure if the Gypsum and Railway industry will start back up in the next 5 years though

**4. Should land within Falmouth be allowed to remain zoned Agricultural?**

- Yes

**5. No new intensive livestock or agricultural support uses are permitted in the Growth Centre – is this reasonable?**

- Can understand why people don't want that near their homes, however it would create more jobs. It could increase the population to have more jobs.
- Could create more pollution
- Support agriculture but restrictions on size with residential around it - smaller impact
- Any household over 1 acre of land is allowed household livestock
- Currently capped at 8 animal units
- Farmers should have rights to expand if they want
- 4-H benefits from household livestock being allowed under 1 acre – especially to be self-sustaining
- I would not support large processing but small places like a butcher I would be ok with.
- For household livestock we don't want to stifle self-reliance

**6. How will the highway twinning influence growth (commercial or residential) in Falmouth?**

- The highway twinning could mean both commercial and residential growth

**7. *New institutional development is only considered by DA (i.e. schools, churches, community halls, fire halls, seniors housing, etc.). How does the community feel about this?***

- Seniors housing should be by development agreement with the particulars spelled out

***Other comments:***

- Clear cutting is a major problem especially with residential uses spreading out
- We've got an aging population.
- A property located across from Lawtons was just taken down after being vacant for the last few years
- How will the causeway plans effect Falmouth?
- Municipality should acquire the land along the river in Falmouth to create green space

**Summary Comments**

- Residential growth
  - Multi-unit
  - Affordable (sq. ft. smaller)
  - Good for seniors and young families
  - Architectural standards
  - More Two Unit Residential (R-2) Zones
  - Mini-homes and mobile homes should remain in parks
  - What is the servicing limit for Falmouth?
- Commercial
  - Smaller scale
  - Serves residents of Falmouth
  - Could expand along old highway 1 (if expansion is needed anywhere)
- Falmouth = RURAL
- However, the subdivisions are more suburban
- Increase the green space and walking trails

## Hantsport

October 10, 2019

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

### Describe Hantsport

- Accessible
- Affordable
- Bank-less (only have Credit Union now)
- Defined areas for commercial and residential
- Dog friendly (dog park)
- Family (x2)
- Friendly and Safe
- High taxes
- Higher density
- Historic
- Industry
- Lack of interest / engagement
- Low crime
- Low population
- Not ethnically diverse
- Older population
- Proud
- Recreation
- Recreational opportunities
- Walkable
- Walker friendly
- Want better lighting
- Want promotion of McCully Pines
- Want revitalized downtown / more businesses
- Welcoming (x2)
- William Hall – History
- Young families

### In 20+ years from now what do you hope this area is known for?

- Everything you need from cradle to grave
- Vibrant community
- Inclusive community
- Food security for all
- Solar powered community (Net 0)
- Land uses are well defined
- We would like to see a more revitalized downtown - More businesses
- Commercial businesses – retail businesses recently purchased however now sitting vacant – why are the new owners not doing anything with the property? How can we encourage people to develop? Perhaps a study could be done to determine why these properties are left vacant
- Less expensive residential homes however higher taxes due to the area rate
- Comparison for taxes / services – there should be promotion of the services we are given in Hantsport (i.e. water, sewer, sidewalks, streetlights, etc.)

- Unsightly properties – how do we encourage people to maintain their properties?
- Most properties zoned Two Unit Residential (R-2) for future development on the Zoning map are land locked or would need the extension of roads to be possible. Some of that land would not be suitable for building
- Requiring smaller building/ property footprints would increase density and encourage more development in serviced areas
- Recreational cabins – comments regarding amendments to the Hantsport documents
- Current housing stock seems to meet the needs and is priced appropriately- its selling well
- There seems to be a good turn over of homes, we could use more families
- People are downsizing however there is nowhere for elderly residents to go within the community
- We could use at least two new senior residents to keep up with the senior population
- McCully Pines should be advertised as affordable and accessible housing options. The Municipality should be doing more to promote and expand it
- Hantsport documents should have criteria that allow the public to have their say on an amendment to zoning – the public should be asked if they are in favour or not – it could be the properties within 300 ft (or more in the community of Hantsport) – 50% or another minimum threshold amount for public input with a yes/no vote
- Home based businesses should be restricted to appointment-based businesses where there may only be one person at the business at a time and should not include a retail store where multiple people are there at once.
- No specific list for the types of home-based businesses works for Hantsport because it leaves it open to opportunity

### **Sustainability**

- Cradle to grave: the community should have and does have most services (i.e. doctor, daycare, school, grocery store, bank, post office, recreation facilities, fire department, commercial areas, liquor store). There is no funeral home, comfort centre or police station.
- Lions club lost their ability to make breakfast to raise money for the club. The commercial kitchen did not have the proper commercial fan in the kitchen to deal with grease from cooking bacon. The food inspector / fire department shut them down.
- What would happen to Hantsport if the remaining industrial businesses were to leave? Hantsport would continue to be a bedroom community

### **Climate change**

- Shore up the bank along Avon Street; also properties adjacent to the river need protection
- Clean out ditches on McCully Pines
- Willow Brook needs to be dredged or have the water diverted from Chittick Ave (floods during storms)
- What happens if they put the fire hall on Chittick Ave with the problems of flooding that exist today?
- If you have a 1,000-year flood there would be a lot more to be concerned with
- The town is high enough from the water that most areas are ok

### **Renewable energy**

- There probably is an interest but its cost prohibitive

- 20-year payback on solar through Efficiency NS
- Department of Energy has a new community building program which offers major incentives for large industrial solar projects
- However, there needs to be the incentive for small businesses
- Parking – should not be allowed on certain streets
- Sidewalks – replace existing; don't take away
- Trees near power lines – NS Power need to cut in this area
- Fire station could be considered on Fundy Gypsum site if they were to ever sell
- Hantsport should be open to possibilities – create policies to consider businesses
- What is happening with the old railway station property?
- We don't need more sports fields
- We should be open to anything by DA (development agreement)
- Agricultural land on outskirts near Bog Rd. – some land could not be used for residential and only available for agriculture
- Sustainability and alternative energy should be promoted
- Permit agriculture (not restrict), buy local produce, promote food security and grow on their residential sites
- Deer pressure (urban deer) in the area – new population with no control – people can't grow their own produce because it will get eaten by the deer
- In the residential areas there should be no tax implications if someone runs a home-based business from their home
- Need education on renewable energy – have the conversation, use examples/case studies
- Need to get people engaged (people in the area default to Hantsport Memorial Community Centre (HMCC) to deal with all issues)
- People only care if it affects their pocketbook
- Need to use general values of the community as a criterion to determine if an application meets the values of Hantsport instead of asking each individual neighbour
- Remind people that commercial activity means tax-base and jobs in the community
- Health community – parks and sidewalks
- Food (pre-packaged and prepared) for all
- HMCC and library have a farmers and artisans workshop once a week – encourage community to collaborate – need semi-permanent stalls built for the community to use
- In the commercial areas there could be a workshop for artisans (examples from Quebec re: artisan hub and community equipment)
- Signage needed in Hantsport (similar to Blue Route) to promote artisans route
- The highway twinning may be good for residents of the area, but tourists like to stay on the secondary routes which brings people right through the community – this could mean growth for businesses if it was promoted
- Need community driver instead of industry driven community
- “Public welcome” remove the formality of public meetings and move the locations
- Need open house and community coffee days – good for elderly and new people
- **Wind turbines – should they be allowed in Hantsport?** There is probably no land available to put them
- Small businesses are feeling the squeeze from all levels of government

## Summerville to Walton

October 29, 2019

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

### Describe your Community

#### West Hants

- Large area
- Diverse needs
- Rural
- Organic farms
- On-land fish farms
- Best of Everything
- Heart of NS
- Built by the tides
- Middle of nowhere
- Nothing nearby
- Peaceful usually
- Although also like the wild west sometimes

#### Summerville

- Good food
- Opportunity
- Rural
- Surrounded by farms
- Beautiful
- Needs promotion

#### The Shore

- Rural
- Scenic (2)
- Clean
- A hidden beauty
- End of the road
- Community
- Great beach
- Good place for new doctors
- Peaceful
- Residential
- Needs young people
- Unknown part of NS
- Rising tide shore
- Beautiful
- Community Health Centre (2)

- Recreation
- Tourism
- Isolated
- Describing my community as “end of the road” can be positive (no one cares what I get up to) but also negative (increased crime with little policing)
- Break-ins are a major concern and can prevent families from feeling safe
- Attracting families is important however it is a long way to bus kids to the High School
- Need new doctors at the health centre as the current doctors may retire soon
- High speed internet is not provided and no cell coverage
- Division between Windsor and rural WH
- Great potential for climate mitigation if protected forests – Council needs a forest policy (Province first?); Annapolis is working towards one.

### Hamlets

- If people in the Hamlet don’t want something, Council has no choice?
- I’d like to see more of the uses permitted in the Hamlet done by development agreement.
- Development agreements (DA) should be used for uses such as automobile service stations and agricultural uses that spray fertilizers and any industrial or manufacturing uses; others think DA’s will drive businesses away
- Size of operation and potential environmental impact should be a factor for considering a proposal by DA as opposed to rezoning
- Does agricultural processing include a slaughterhouse? **No, this is considered a different use.**
- There should be increased application prices for DA’s if more staff time is required to develop and administer them– if property owners can start up a distillery or large manufacturing business, they should be able to afford the increased cost of a development agreement to a rezoning application.
- Some felt raising the price of DA’s could also drive business away.
- Fertilizer sales and storage could be a concern? **The National Building Code does have specific requirements for this kind of a use.**
- For industrial development, we’d like to see additional studies required to determine the impact.
- Water protection is important; anything that has environmental implications should be more severely regulated; what about meeting Federal and Provincial environmental regulations? Can we ask applicants to meet more stringent requirements? Can we require a DA if Federal or Provincial approvals are required?
- Fracking affects water quality, and although we can’t regulate what is taken out of the ground there should be protections and policy to guide the recycling and disposal of above ground wastewater from mining and fracking sites

- Haliburton case example – the message that the applicant presents should be the same for each stakeholder they meet. They shouldn't be provided the opportunity to change their story based on who they are meeting with
- Council would like more approval "say" – Council feels the decision has already been made when the staff report is being presented, Council only has the opportunity to ask for new information; however, Council should not necessarily ultimately have all the power to make the decision they want.
- How is "compatibility with adjacent land uses" determined?
- It should be up to the applicant to prove their use is compatible and prove that to the public who decided if it is compatible
- Public meetings (not an open house!) should be held in the community of the application before the report goes to Council
- How is the community defined? what amount of the public would be considered a majority in favour or against?
- Definition of "community" – people in Pembroke actually seemed okay with Haliburton however depending on where you define community; there were a lot of people outside that community that were not okay with it. How would a community criterion be defined and evaluated?
- 300 ft notification area may not be good enough for rural areas with large properties; radius of properties should be expanded but no clear guidance provided in terms of how large the notification area should be.
- MPS – broad overarching statements; need one about the "duty of care that Council has to residents" if a statement is too broad how would the Utility and Review Board evaluate it? The MPS needs to be legally defensible.
- Cape Breton Regional Municipality had an appeal example of a campground that would be interesting to look into
- Does the planning department have a duty to consult indigenous peoples? No, the Province does, however our planning department has been interested in adding a criterion to include input from local indigenous groups on projects
- Food processing – Spryfield example (may be closed now) however the neighbours complained about smell and condition of the lots. The use may not be a one size fits all use. They need to be treated fairly across the board.
- a proposal should not be judged based on the company name. The name and use have to be treated fairly.
- Are emergency response plans required? No. It should be a new criterion

#### Resource

- Forestry – there should be herbicide spraying restrictions. That may be regulated through Department of Agriculture or Environment.
- Private Roads should require signage so emergency services know where they are (i.e. Karen Court). Speak to Civic Addressing Coordinator.
- Sand and gravel operations and gravel pits should have restricted hours of operation
- Campgrounds are currently restricted by development agreement

- Mining activity authorized by Provincial or Federal government. **The Municipality rezones properties to allow the buildings associated with mining.** Could the Municipality allow it by DA? Would it matter if the Province approves it anyways?

#### **Criteria for considering rezoning to Rural Commercial (RC) or Resource Industrial (M-1)**

- What are the Federal and Provincial requirements? Can the Municipality be more stringent?
- The Municipality should make a criterion regarding affects on water supply
- We should be able to base decisions on the scope of operation and changes over time
- A DA for industrial uses would allow you to consider the possible negative features of those uses and possibly restrict their scope
- has there been any thought to include the Municipal Climate Change Action Plan (MCCAP) or environmental concerns in the criteria? **Yes, we are considering the options.**

#### **Climate Change**

- Carbon use of new industries should be restricted to net zero. Carbon intensive industries should not be permitted. Some said this is up to the Federal government to regulate however the municipality could encourage alternative energy use and is investigating actions for the community and corporate emissions to help tackle both.
- Effects residents have seen include higher tides, shoreline washing away, breakwaters not there, more intense storms, impacts on bridges in Walton meaning loss of access. Four people think these effects are associated with the Windsor causeway and silt deposits (2 people don't have enough information)
- **National Disaster Mitigation Project identified very detailed risks in this area; solutions need to be developed with additional funding**
- The change has not taken place overnight, it has been decades in the making
- Pembroke Wharf Road now gone and Long Point is no longer there.
- Supports / restrictions on development:
  - Causeway/slucice is run by the Department of Transportation, what can the municipality do?
  - Kempt Shore is flooded all the time
  - new houses should not be allowed on the shoreline; can cause additional stress to cliffs
  - Need information for new property owners so they know the risks
  - If regulations are not put in place now the government will have to give out money later for property owners to relocate
  - Add extra setback distances for development from the coastline
  - If the Province is developing restrictions, can ours be stricter? I think they should be. Yes, we can develop stricter restrictions for costal development.

#### **Additional Comments**

- The planning documents need mechanisms to be able to say no to developers and property owners when they want to do a use that isn't permitted as-of-right
- People would like input into planning decisions
- There could be a public input criterion

- Objection to the two Haliburton properties being rezoned; they shouldn't have been allowed to rezone both properties when they are only currently using one.
- Using sludge (treated sewage) on farmlands should be restricted; 2010 guide from Department of Environment; climate change may increase water that could cause runoff from properties using this material and contaminate water.

## Vaughan

November 5, 2019

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

### Describe your Community

- Lakes
- Lake front
- Lake enjoyment
- Lake recreation e.g. swimming, kayaking
- Recreation (4)
- Cottage(s) (3)
- Cottage life (2)
- Cottage country (2)
- Lifestyle – cottage living
- Retirement
- Tranquil
- Peaceful (2)
- Remote
- Private gated community
- Private roads
- Isolated
- Residence
- Residential
- Homes
- Rural (2)
- Hamlets
- Scenic
- Friendships
- Friendly neighbours
- Looking out for one another
- Enforcement of county by-laws in private community (Animal by-law re: household livestock)
- Determination of fair tax rate (quantifies by service)
- Environment (positive) / impacts to the environment (negative)
- E. coli levels in Middle Lake (negative) with long term effects (negative)
- Municipality needs a policy to keep environment protected
- Renters through Airbnb (negative)

### ***In 20+ years from now what do you hope this area is known for?***

- Pristine water
- Pristine environment
- Healthy environment

- Environmental protections (2)
- Clean environment
- Green
- Vibrant
- Quiet
- Be able to use the lake
- Recreational area
- Recreational resources
- Stay cottage country
- Remain as it was intended – Cottage country
- Remain unchanged as quiet residential
- Residential area
- Protection of lakes, parks and land
- A clean area to live in
- Land usage – don't want livestock
- Public input observed
- Recreational facilities (ice skating rink)
- Bicycle roads to Windsor
- Multi-use trail to Windsor
- High speed communications (phone and internet)
- Self-driving cars
- Electric charging stations

#### **Environmental Protections and Livestock**

- We bought into cottage country and now we're waking up to farms, this is not ok. It should not be allowed.
- We want to protect the environment
- Zoning regulations are not keeping this area good
- We need environmental protections
- Animal by-laws are being ignored. The Development Officer has inspected the specific property on several occasions, and it does meet the Land Use By-law requirements.
- Too many animal units are permitted in this area
- We should not have livestock going in our lakes
- There are no lake protections, one person is ruining it for the rest of us
- We need setback restrictions from the lake
- You need specific restrictions for the environment
- It should not be legal for hazardous waste to be dumped in the lake
- E. coli levels in Middle Lake have increased significantly in the last two years

#### **The Resource Designation**

- I bought in to Middle Lake Cottage Country to retire, I didn't buy my cottage thinking commercial would be allowed nearby

- The resource zone needs some environmental protections
- There are a lot of other uses allowed in this area that should not be
- We pay good taxes, we expect our beautiful place to be protected
- Our property values have gone down because of noise and smell
- We make up 8% of the residential assessment for West Hants

### **Public Input and Planning Process**

- Public input needs to be brought up and included in applications
- We need a shorter time to address these concerns, this Plan Review will take 3-4 years that's too late to prevent further damage
- Vaughan wants documents to change sooner – **Staff will discuss with the Director of Planning and Development**
- When will the meetings minutes be available? **Most likely by January we will have the "What We Heard" report finalized and available**

### **Additional Livestock Discussion**

- Could 30 or more farms pop up today? **Commercial farms are considered a different category from household livestock. The intention behind household livestock is to allow residents to have a small number of animals for their own needs.**
- We have no issue with small-scale agriculture and support that, we have concerns with the animals going into the lake
- Is livestock based on usable land or all land on the property? **It is based on all land on the property.** Household livestock provisions should be made on the % of usable land not just total acreage (i.e. if a property is mainly wetland but they have a large acreage they will have all the animals on the usable piece creating a huge amount on a small portion of their property)
- The number of livestock that are permitted is concerning.
- They take their animals to the common park, that's not right! How is municipal common parkland allowed to be used for animal grazing?
- The animals could deter other people from living here
- Could the animals be controlled in a covenant? The only associations in the area are road associations and they would not be able to enforce animal controls.
- No one enforces the covenants that do exist.
- The road owner's association are a group of individuals that pay for the road maintenance. They are not a community association. Covenants do not work to restrict the livestock and would not be enforced.

### **Hamlet designation**

- If the hamlet designation prioritizes residential development, we should be a hamlet!
- A hamlet would fit this community better than the Resource designation

### **Private Roads**

- **Private roads are only permitted in the resource designation – they would not be permitted in a Hamlet**
- Okay with allowing private road development or restricting it. No anticipated expansion off of the existing private roads in the future

- Think about the forestry areas – they would not want to be restricted to not allowing private roads.
- Rural commercial or hamlet industrial uses should not be permitted on a private road – traffic, roadway quality concerns
- We all agree with seasonal dwelling on private roads in this area

#### **Additional Comments on Planning Process**

- This should be a pressing issue, can we change the designation faster than the Plan Review?
- The lake is deteriorating, we don't have time to wait a few more years
- We think this community is cottage country and the zoning should reflect that
- We hear mixed responses from different government agencies about the livestock issue. We need a consistent approach or contact for our concerns. The municipality should speak up and represent our concerns to the Dept. of Environment.

#### **How has climate change impacted you?**

- Water levels have decreased
- Driveway culverts were not engineered properly and now need to be fixed for 1 in 100-year storms (stormwater management)
- Our weather has changed, we get a lot of rain fall
- There are weird bugs (pine beetles) potentially killing our trees
- Stronger winds more often
- A lot of power outages

#### **General Concerns**

- Is Highway 14 too skinny? there seem to be a lot of accidents on this road
- The speed limit is too high and a lot of drivers drive on the centre line
- There is one person who bikes through this area, its far to dangerous to bike
- Need a reduced speed limit or more police patrols
- What about traffic calming measures? i.e. flashing speed limit signs when approaching residential areas
- Highway 14 is a tourist road and a lot of garbage collects, who is supposed to pick up that garbage?
- What is your deliverable for the Plan Review? **We will provide the Planning Advisory Committee with a summary of the comments received in a "What We Heard" report and start drafting the planning documents based on comments received. Once we have drafted the policies, we will bring them back to the public in meetings like this for the public to review and comment on.**
- It would be nice to do a review of the documents more often, or at least public meetings like this every 3 years to keep the conversation going (with staff and elected officials)
- This community is pretty engaged, our concerns represent similar concerns to other people living on lakes in West Hants
- The five lake associations meeting a few times a year to discuss issues and have presented our collective concerns to Council but it feels like we are not being heard
- We pay the same taxes but get less in terms of services

- Middle Lake needs restrictions on lake and livestock
- The Municipality could work collaboratively with us; staff and Councillors have not been receptive to our concerns and requests
- We identify as a hamlet
- That slide with all the things a planner thinks of are all related to the issues we've raised tonight, those need to be addressed

## Brooklyn, Newport Station and Newport Corner

November 7, 2019

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

### Describe your Community

- Hub for rural communities
- Lots of amenities (i.e. rink, fire department, schools)
- Centralized services (i.e. school, rink, fire hall)
- Strong volunteer base
- Bedroom community of Halifax
- People stop for services (i.e. home hardware, NSLC)
- Internet needs to be upgraded and made available
- More Active Transportation trails (potentially using the railbed)
- Need for a general store
- Most people still go to Windsor for most needs
- Need water and sewer and streetlight upgrades
- Need affordable transportation options

### **General Comments About Brooklyn**

- Brooklyn has always been a hub for rural areas, it a natural place for development and it is maintained itself over the years
- There is a lot of interest in getting water here
- We need water, sewer and streetlight improvements
- It is expensive to fix the individual well systems here because we are on gypsum
- Cost is the main deterrent to getting water services, people were worried it would raise their taxes, but this could have changed
- People move here from the city and expect services
- **Is there a lot of development in the Single Unit Residential (R-1) section?** Yes, but the lots are very steep
- There are some apartments here, but not a lot of rental properties
- People seem to be always looking for rental
- **Is there any kind of housing you would be opposed to in Brooklyn (i.e. multi-unit, mobile homes, etc.)?** I think there is room for any kind of housing
- **The zoning rules require 1 acre of land per unit for multi-unit housing, is this too restrictive?** The lots are bigger here, so we still have room for multi-units
- However, people that are low-income and want to live in rental properties find it hard to stay in Brooklyn without a car, they often move to Windsor
- I sometimes see people on the street needing a ride and they can not afford taxis so I give them a lift if I'm on my way to Windsor
- I see a lot of people walking around Brooklyn
- There are some trails at the school and fire hall more trails and sidewalks would be useful

- Public transit would be good for lower-income people to live here, they can't live here now because they can't get around, so they have to live in Windsor
- We are a tight knit community
- I think it has the strongest volunteer base
- People can't believe we have this fire station
- There is a lot of community involvement
- **Do people drive through the community or stop and use services?** A lot of people stop at the Petrocan and the home hardware. We need those services here.
- We could use another general store since the one in Brooklyn closed a few years ago
- We have an auto garage and gas stations
- **Where do most people go for groceries and other services?** Mostly Windsor, some people go to Sackville, and New Minus
- **Why do people choose to live in Brooklyn over Halifax?** Lower cost of living, rural lifestyle, having horses
- Three main draws to the area: schools, rink and fire department
- I would like to see more growth in the area
- Rural internet is something we need!
- Rural internet would bring development
- The railroad was a key to growth in the area in the past
- If the rail line was turned into an AT trail it could be a great connection for the area

#### **Agricultural Land in Brooklyn**

- Agricultural zone near the north end of Brooklyn on Highway 215 are fields used for agriculture purposes
- Agricultural zone in the south west corner of Brooklyn are forested and not likely still used for agriculture

#### **Is there Enough Commercial Space Designated?**

- There are a few vacant stores now
- On the west side of the commercial designation it is mostly residential

## Ellershouse and Ardoise

November 14, 2019

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

### Describe your Community

#### Ellershouse

- Friendly
- Some good people here
- Post office and store
- Close to highway
- Transitioning into a bedroom community
- Willing to listen to new ideas to involve people
- Can be an active place if one wants to get involved
- Lived here all my life
- A lot of new families have moved here over the years
- It is a good community, friends, volunteers, etc.
- Offers community activities (breakfasts, etc.)
- Community hall for events (breakfast, tea, meetings)
- We have breakfast monthly at the hall – need more help!
- Need more support in hall and community function
- More younger volunteers to aid in community functions
- Former rail line – future uses?

#### Ardoise

- Peaceful
- Community hall
- Quiet
- Agricultural
- Good location to live, close to metro and the valley

### ***In 20+ years from now what do you hope this area is known for?***

- Hope more young families see the plus of life in country living (Ardoise)
- That we continue to have a post office and store and other small businesses in the area
- That there will still be an active group of people here
- Be friendly and get along together
- Have the railroad back again
- Use/purpose for railway
- Public transportation – walking trails – to be able to walk along the road without being in the ditch
- Sidewalks needed
- Streetlights needed
- Outdoor community spaces
- Different types of housing
- More residential development

- Need seniors housing so people don't have to leave their communities
- Booming, busy village with ALL people working together for a happy place
- Pave other exit / entrance to Ellershous
- Above water (i.e. climate change)

**The hamlet designation prioritizes residential uses over resource and commercial uses, how do you feel about this?**

- Disruptive resource uses should not be near residential areas - you need to have significant buffers between uses
- In the Rural Residential (R-4) zone when it says manufactured homes does that mean a mini home park? **No, there is a specific zone for mini home parks**

**Are there enough commercial businesses in the area?**

- There was a shop out of someone's garage in Ardoise but it couldn't survive because people would go to Windsor, Halifax or New Minus to shop
- We sometimes come to the store in Ellershous
- Most people work outside of the area so they shop where they work or on their way home
- The prices of items are higher at the local stores because they are not able to buy at the same volume as big box grocery stores
- It is hard for local businesses to compete with big box retailers
- You may also get more variety of goods outside of the area
- Brooklyn had a general store but it didn't survive
- Commercial needs to be scaled appropriately to the population

**We've heard Brooklyn is a hub for the rural areas, do you visit some of their businesses?**

- We go to the hardware store
- If I had kids, I would spend a lot more time there because of the schools
- The schools draw people in
- The gas station there has everything; it's basically a grocery store

**Rural Commercial**

- The only one I would be concerned about is the automobile service stations due to potential environmental issues
- I don't think any of the uses listed in the Rural Commercial zone would work here because a lot of people's properties are too close to the road, and there are not enough people to support those businesses
- We have a kennel already in Ardoise although not well advertised

**Hamlet Industrial**

- No comments

**General Comments**

- Lighting could be added as a criterion for applications as it can sometimes be offensive depending on the use
- The level of water in the brook has been impacted by climate change
- The water levels have increased due to clear cutting near by – there is nothing slowing the water down now
- Erosion is an issue with the kinds of rain we've been getting

- Renewables are a better direction to go with than fossil fuels
- HRM has a solar program to help homeowners finance solar, could we have something like that here?
- It is a big investment to install solar panels
- We are older so we won't see the payback for installing panels, but the younger people should do it because they will see the results
- The price has been going down on renewables and the payback period has reduced
- Can the municipality or province have any say on clear-cutting? **No, the only place that has guidelines on forestry is watersheds and those are guidelines not regulations**
- Need to think of the impact of clear cutting not just for the people today but for the future (i.e. clear cutting and rising tides)
- How much do we want to industrialize the rural landscape? Industrialization should stay in places like Burnside
- There should be a criterion that allows Council to vote against something if they think it's hazardous – they should be able to state that they are following a "duty of care" to their residents, and that the specific use is not appropriate for the community
- Clear-cutting is a concern and the Province or Council should force people to replant
- New Zealand requires woodlot owners to provide a down payment to the government or replant within 3 years
- Finland does selective clear-cutting and invests money in the regrowth of the forests; we should consider what they do
- The association of municipalities could band together and be more powerful to deal with forestry issues
- If forestry was continually linked to climate change (i.e. erosion, water levels, cooling effect, carbon sinks, etc.) it would be dealt with faster
- I think the annual grant program from the Municipality is great and should stay

## Avondale and the Burlington's

January 23, 2020

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

### Describe your Community

#### Avondale

- Friendly (6)
- Friendly Neighbours
- Helpful
- Good neighbourhood
- Close knit community
- Look out for one another
- Welcoming
- Engaged
- Co-operative
- Vibrant
- Beautiful (2)
- Quiet (3)
- Artistic
- Recreational
- Peaceful (2)
- United
- Underserviced
- Best place ever
- Endangered (flooding)
- Diverse
- Diversified in Farms
- Valued way of life
- Eager to grow
- Variety
- Small
- Birdwatching
- Hidden gem
- Natural wonder
- Agricultural
- Winery
- Festivals
- Historically culturally diverse
- Historic – boatbuilding
- Avondale wharf and waterfront
- Last commercial fishery
- Boat launching
- Wedding destination

#### Belmont

- Peaceful
- Friendly
- Great breakfast at the community hall

- Road repairs needed
- Historic (farming)

#### **Poplar Grove**

- Farming
- Quiet
- Safe
- Open Space
- Wildlife
- Peaceful (2)
- Friendly
- Beautiful views
- Historic (Acadians)

#### **McKay Section**

- Friendly
- Quiet
- Rural

#### **Upper Burlington**

- Very Rural (peaceful)
- Improved hiking trails
- Better parks

#### **West Hants**

- #2 for the best agricultural land in the Province
- Clean environment
- Culturally diverse
- Commute to HRM
- Provincial parks (Smileys)
- Picturesque
- Skiing
- Natural environment (Karst)
- Lady slipper

#### **What does the community see for itself in the next 20+ years?**

- Recovering the St. Croix and Avondale rivers; down with the causeway
- Make case study / example site of climate change mitigation opportunities
- Currently losing 100 ha of Ramsar marshland protected area; need to change this
- Remove WH from being known as being a bad example of fish passage
- Utilize local knowledge for education
- Commercially viable small farms
- Protection of agricultural land from development and climate change
- Safer and wider roads including sidewalks and reduces / enforced speed limits
- More recreation, trails and active living
- Improved dykes on Avon and St. Croix rivers
- Local food production
- Potable water source
- Known as festival hub (locally, provincially, nationally and internationally)
- Viable family farms
- Remain affordable (housing and lifestyle)

- More young people attracted to the area
- Recognition of culture and history
- More anti-racism work
- Community greenhouses
- Restrict any potential development on old gypsum site – make sure there's no future land fill and any alternative use is compatible with the community
- More archaeological work to learn history of the area; more emphasis on Acadian heritage
- Property taxes? i.e. how will all this be paid for
- Eco-tourism – is it viable when transportation costs may increase in the future?

**Newport Landing is a Hamlet and the priority for Hamlets is concentrated residential growth in rural areas. How do you feel about this?**

- Not enough land for it to be considered agriculture
- The ability to grow food, potentially communally, could be considered with everyone close together
- We cannot have density because of the lack of and quality of water here; the gypsum has resulted in poor water quality

**How do you feel about commercial, industrial, and institutional opportunities?**

- Avondale Wharf was a key community/commercial fishing spot
- Not having a working wharf has impacted the economy; Hantsport has a wharf but it's not public
- The mudflats in this area have healing properties that are not being realized
- We could ask the Federal government to contribute to the wharf
- Eco-tourism could be a real opportunity in this area with kayaking and tours
- However, travel will be more expensive in the future, tourism should not be the main economic driver
- Tourism is great until the dollar changes
- What would a group home be considered? Institutional
- There is no water so we cannot have businesses until that gets fixed. We could create a criteria requiring adequate water or ensuring a new use would not impact water.
- What would Airbnb be considered? *We are currently working with Dalhousie University students on a project to understand how and if short term rentals such as Airbnb should be regulated. Currently they are considered a residential use.*
- What if I wanted to have a law office from my house? *As long as it is below a certain sq. ft. size requirement you could do it as-of-right as a home based business.*
- What about special uses like festivals? *We would need to look into the those regulations but it is likely just signage and possibly restrictions on how many events you can host per year*
- The museum is zoned Institutional, what would we have to do if we moved it? *You would need a development agreement for the new site.*

**How do you feel about the Agricultural zoning?**

- We were considered priority 1 at one point so when did that change? *Staff are unsure but will look into this.*
- We want more stringent protection; I'd rather apply to do the agriculture support uses than have them permitted as-of-right.

**Climate Change**

- Reclamation of Salmon River Salt March is already taking place; the Municipality should look at this as an example case for reclamation efforts here.
- I want to start a solar farm on my property and share with my neighbours but NS Power does not allow this. Could the Municipality help? **We can look into the options.**
- We have a lot of environmentally minded people in this area
- We have the worst fish passage in North America it can be improved fairly quickly, we could be the best!
- People shouldn't be allowed to build on the coastline, there should be more rules for the permits to prevent this
- If you are restricting development on the coast you need to consider compensation
- Who owns the trails? Either the municipality or private trail associations.
- Fracking is also a concern in this area, we are prime for it.
- We have reviewed the disaster mitigation project and there are no short-term solutions, could we build a dyke around the museum? Would there be funding available?

#### **General Comments**

- The signs at the wharf look great but they block where the boat trailers used to park. We can pass this along to the recreation department.
- Are there any wildlife mitigation measures? There are permits available from Natural Resources.

### 5.3 Exit Survey

West Hants Resident	Business Owner	Farmer/ Farm Employee	Other
62	6	21	11

How did you hear about this event?	What did you enjoy most about this event?	What would make this event better?	Any additional comments?
Personal invite	Brainstorming and pointed questions	More people participating	
Municipal Facebook	Informality, good organizations	Better attendance- due to timing	
Personal invite	Good topics for discussion and meeting new people	Even more opinions and participation	
Personal invite	Hearing educated opinions of others attending/ suggestions of what we can do	More participation from stakeholders and residents	
Personal invite	The Municipality being open to progressive strategies	Better attendance from other developers and the public	
WHPAC Meeting	Small Group, Lifelong residents, had great perspectives	A+ thank you	
Facebook Events	Very informal and informative	Tea	
Online	Learning some things about our community that we didn't know	More people thus more information and questions	
Online	The conversations of the community	More people	
Mailing List	Facilitators (skilled and effective) good mix of attendees	More participation	
Mailing List			
Mailing List	Great Planners! Thanks! Good that Coby Milne was here.	Not sure. There was some good thinkers at this one meeting	

		need the good thinkers. How to get them there each time.	
Social Media + Posters	Everything provided by planners	More people in attendance	
Councillor and Online	Great suggestions and good information	Better advertised and more participation	
Mailing List and Online	Coby Milne provided excellent advice		
Word of mouth	Very educational		
	Very useful and educational		
Email from West Hants	Good direction from Planners! Good to see Abe here.	Don't know how to get more of the public here	
Councillor and Mailing List	Good info and discussion	More attending, was power outage a factor?	
Website	Meeting other interests in environment issues and good management of meeting	More attendees	
Valley Events page	Inviting space, good listeners, central spot - well thought	That we ask another person to come with us - we could extend invites to others	
Poster, Emails, Friends, Website	The Planners	More people from the community.	
Email from acquaintance	Can't say enjoyable but most informative		Informative
CAPE Meeting in October	Process of WHPAC information		
CAPE Meeting in October	Not that good of a meeting. Give opportunity to make suggestions.	Lists to check off, choices, add issues	
CAPE Meeting in October			Very Informative lots of opportunities for questions

Poster @ Flying Apron	Learning more in regards to the planning process and being able to voice opinion	A warmer venue	
Poster @ Municipal Office	An opportunity to get questions answered		
Newsletter	Q+A lots of info		
Friend	Open candid conversation	Possibly having the elected official for the area attending the meeting	
Word of mouth	Informative, encouraging	Trying to get more people out	
Word of mouth	We are all on the same side, no arguing		
Friend	People listening		
Debbie email	Participation of everyone involved	Coffee and cream	
Councillor Daniels	You were receptive to our comments		
Councillor Daniels	Information sharing		
Email	Openness	More updates on planning activities	
Friends	Feeling like we were being heard		
Phone call with Planner	Organization of delivery, listening to what we had to say	More adventurous of meeting	
Notification from West Hants	Good feedback opportunity	More often	
Councillor Daniels	Getting a better understanding of the process	Wine!	
Arodise Councillor	Source of information for us	More residents	
Arodise Councillor	Useful information	More people	
Newsletter/Friend	General information		
Word of mouth			
Wife	Understanding of planning logic	Things cannot simply carry on as at present, cannot expect better!	

Webpage	New ideas for growth	Implement some of the ideas	
Word of mouth	Still kept the meeting	A sound system	
Journal (Newspaper)	Good discussion		

## 5.4 Youth Engagement

### West Hants Middle School

November 27, 2018  
10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

### West Hants Survey

#### 1. What do you think the best place in West Hants is?

Votes	Place	Comments
9	Ski Martock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I like skiing and it's a really fun activity</li> <li>It's fun</li> </ul>
9	Newport District Arena (Brooklyn Rink)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is updated and fresh. It also gives hockey teams from away a good impression. It gives all hockey teams and figure skating teams a comfortable space to play and practice.</li> </ul>
4	Windsor Rink / Exhibition Grounds	
2	Falmouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is close to things but not too close to things that it is crazy</li> <li>She lives there with all her friends</li> </ul>
2	On-tree	
2	Gordon Hughes tennis	
2	Hants Aquatic Centre (Windsor Swimming Pool)	
1	Kings Edgehill Sports Complex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It has many opportunities like swimming, indoor sports, turf, track and work out gym</li> </ul>
1	Kings Edgehill	
1	ICE gym	
1	Quick as a Wink Theatre Society	
1	Pisiquid Canoe Club	
1	Windsor Regional Library	
1	Rinks	
1	Soccer fields	
1	Gazebo at the Windsor Waterfront	
1	Schools	
1	Camp Mockingee	

1	The Makers	
1	Hillsvale	

**2. What is your least favourite place in West Hants?**

Votes	Place	Comments
9	Downtown Windsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Around Tommy Guns there's scary people who smoke and aren't that friendly</li> <li>• It is old and not up to date</li> <li>• Some of the people scare me there and I feel I can't walk on the streets without an adult</li> <li>• The area around Tommy Guns because there are people that just sit around there all day and smoke</li> <li>• The old buildings are kind of creepy</li> <li>• Near the Tim Hortons in Windsor, across the street people smoke stuff</li> </ul>
4	Windsor Rink / Exhibition Arena	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is falling apart, dirty and outdated. The netting has had to be sewen and fixed many times due to holes. There are leaks and holes in the walls. It is uncomfortable and difficult to use.</li> </ul>
2	Windsor mall	
2	The dump (land fill site)	
2	Hants County War Memorial Centre (Windsor Community Centre)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's quite dirty and outdated</li> </ul>
1	Superstore	
1	Three Mile Plains School	
1	Windsor Curling Club	
1	The "Y" in the road in Brooklyn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is very confusing</li> </ul>
1	Windsor Regional Library	
1	Community Centre by the Lynch Road	

**3. If you were the Warden, what would the first thing you would do to make West Hants a better place for young people?**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (3) Ban smoking/vaping</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer more kid like activities in the community for families to go and enjoy. Also make more cute little stores downtown to make it more interesting.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I think we need a new hockey rink because a lot of young people play hockey</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new, nice hockey rink and a soccer dome</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add more stores in downtown area and there would be less smoking stores</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put a playground and dog park to get people out and being more active</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public sledding hills</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make playing sports easier for kids</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make opportunities</li> </ul>

• Add more public playgrounds
• Wi-Fi at Newport Rink
• More cell towers
• Clean the Windsor pool more
• Free Wi-Fi everywhere
• Bring in more new recreation in Windsor/West Hants for youth
• Fill in pot holes (for when your biking)
• Build the rink in Windsor
• Animal café, a café in a rural area
• More thrift shops or shops in general
• Create areas that more accessible to young people/start activities
• Add a playground by the Waterfront

**4. What things in West Hants should stay the same? Why?**

• (2) Schools because when all the elementary schools go to West Hants Middle School all the kids meet new people and make more friends; how the elementary schools go together
• Subdivisions
• The tennis courts should stay because a lot of people get together from around the community to play
• I would like the lake and the causeway to stay the same
• Less driving because it is expensive and burns fossil fuels
• The good education because education is good
• The ice surfaces
• The Newport Rink because it's a new rink and it is used a lot
• The restaurants in Windsor should stay
• Rinks and playgrounds
• Pisiquid Canoe Club
• Rink (Brooklyn) for hockey
• The Gazebo/skate park because they are good outdoor areas to relax and socialize
• The gazebo is relaxing, pub trivia

**5. Describe smells you are aware of in your neighbourhood. Indicate which smells, if any, bother you.**

Votes	Smell	Good or Bad
10	Sewer / Sewage	5 bad – 4 sewer smell outside the school / behind WHMS
7	Smoke	1 bad Cigarette Smoke; 1 bad fire / smoke
5	Manure (cow poop)	1 bad
4	Grass, flowers, trees (Nature) (Forestry smells)	3 good
3	Weed (Cannabis)	
3	Gasoline	1 good
2	Food / Cooking	2 good
2	Farms	

2	Burning garbage	
2	Dog waste	1 bad
1	Burning grass	
1	Skunk	
1	Horse barns	
1	Exhaust	
1	Wood	
1	Dogs / cats	
1	Junk yard	
1	The pond across the road	
1	Seaweed	

**6. Describe sounds you hear in your neighbourhood. Indicate which sounds, if any, bother you.**

Votes	Noise	Good or Bad
7	Cars / trucks	2 bad; 1 good loud cars
5	Dirt bikes	
4	Dogs	3 barking (1 bad); 1 bad for "yippy dogs always outside and barking at people"
3	Loud neighbours	1 construction at my neighbours in the middle of the night; 1 bad neighbours playing REALLY loud music
3	Cows	
2	Gun shots	
2	Yelling / screaming	1 bad
2	Horses	1 good
1	Talking in the streets	
1	Chickens	
1	Llamas	
1	Kids	
1	Tractors	
1	Squealing tires	
1	4-wheelers	1 bad
1	Motorcycles	1 bad
1	Brothers screaming	1 bad
1	Waves	1 good
1	Birds	1 good

**7. Are there any recreation sites (parks or community centres) near your home?**

• Yes, Kings Edgehill and Windsor Community Centre
• Windsor pool
• Yes, park
• Community Hall
• Community Centre

• Ski Martock
• Brooklyn elementary school playground
• Brooklyn rink, golf course
• In Upper Burlington beside the old school
• Closest would be Ardoise Community Centre
• Yes, Summerville Health Centre
• Yes, Haliburton House park
• (2) Smileys park
• West Hants office and the community centre
• Playground
• Three Mile Plains Community Hall
• Ellershuse (no); Windsor (not really)
• (3) No

**If so, how often do you use them?**

1	Daily
3	Weekly
4	Monthly
1	Yearly
4	Never

**8. What groups, programs or sports teams are you part of?**

Votes	Place
12	Hockey (2 WH, 1 WH peewee AAA, 1 WH peewee B, 1 WH Warriors)
7	Soccer
7	Tennis (1 Gordon Hughes Club)
5	Skiing (2 Martock race club)
4	Volleyball (1 school)
3	Cheerleading (2 ICE, 1 school)
3	Snowboarding (WHMS snowboard team)
2	Running
2	P.a.s.t.e. (Physically Active, Ambassadors, Student motivators, Technology, Environment)
2	Golf
2	Horseback riding
2	Swim (1 lessons, 1 at Kings Edgehill)
2	Basketball (1 Shooting Stars)
2	Theatre (1 Quick as a Wink)
1	Baseball (1 Hantsport AAA)
1	Rugby (spring)
1	Track and Field
1	Figure Skating
1	Gymnastics
1	Pisiquid Canoe Club

1	Moe's Music School
1	Voice
1	Pub trivia
1	Cadets
1	Girl Guides
1	4-H

## 5.5 Online Engagement

### Online Comment Map

Community	What do you love about your community	Why do you choose to live in West Hants	If you could what would you change about your community
West Hants	Sense of family, the landmarks	Work and family close by	More businesses
Sweets Corner	Close to amenities.	I grew up here and like the closeness to Halifax and the valley.	More community involvement.
Brooklyn	The amount of open space we have, as well as the nearby opportunities in the surrounding areas.	My family moved here from Alberta to be closer to family, and for the smaller class size in places of education.	More areas for the community to come together, as well as sidewalks on the roads. Brooklyn has many places that are within walking distance but because of the transport trucks, we are unable to walk.
Windsor	Efficiency within the repairs of community buildings and belongings	Those who help make West Hants better make themselves evident and they're efficient with their projects	Create a more open and safe environment in more locations (such as public playgrounds, utilities and more that are welcome to all, rather than private)
Garlands Crossing	I love how everyone is so close and are always kind	I choose to live in this community because it is small and everyone is very kind	
Belmont	I love that there is a good amount of space	Because the city smells bad	How far away it is from civilization. The closest

	between my neighbours and I.		anything is at least a 5 minute drive away but as someone who cannot drive yet, it is a very inconvenient place to live.
Martock	The location. Living next to the lake.	My family has always lived in West Hants.	Save the lake!
Greenhill	How peaceful it is. It is very quiet.		How there are no businesses
Three Mile Plains	It's small.		I would add more things for teens to do.
Windsor	Everything is close to each other	I don't	Have more things to do for teens
Windsor	That it is fairly close to the school and to Martock	I moved here did not have a choice but I chose to stay because I Liked my school	I would have loved it if people were more educated, approachable and friendly. I wish there were a lot more opportunities for sports young people and places to have fun and definitely a little movie theater
Greenhill	My favorite thing about my community is how nice all the people are and how willing they are to help anyone out.	The size is manageable and the proximity of people.	A general store/shop in a closer proximity to the community.
Woodville	it's very quite and you have lots of space, and there isn't anyone around.	it's a very nice place that has some activities but it isn't crazy like the city	its very far to walk to things such as the stores. also as a person very active in sports its hard to find the way in to town to participate
Windsor	I love how welcoming our community is. It is a lovely place to live and I am grateful for how safe I feel.	I chose to live in West Hants because my dad grew up here and it's where my family wanted to stay. I don't think I would want to move	I honestly wouldn't change anything. I think Windsor/West Hants is a great place. If we keep doing what we are doing now it can only



		anywhere else because I enjoy living here.	get better going forward.
Windsor	My community is a quiet, small town.	It's where my parents live, so I don't really have input on it.	A lot of people who live in the municipality are not open to change in the area.
Newport Corner	I love how I know pretty much everyone on my street. There is just the right amount of space between my neighbors and I.	I chose to live in West Hants because it is where my grandparents and parents live. I live with my parents and my grandparents are very close as well.	I wouldn't change anything about Newport Corner per say, but I would change how many exits there are into "school road" and the hospital. The traffic flow is awful and older people at the crossing have to take a longer trip around to the hospital
Three Mile Plains	There is a lot of friendly people who live around me and I like how close I live to everything in the community	I choose to live in West Hants because it is where my family is from	Only having one road leading into the hospital, I think there should be different ways to reach emergency services such as the hospital.
Windsor	I like that Windsor is close to both the valley and the city, and I like the coziness and charm of downtown Windsor. I like my town and the sense of community we have.	When my parents chose to move here (2001), it was so my dad could live closer to his workplace at the time (CKF) because we lived in Halifax.	
Hantsport	The size of the community of Hantsport. The hospitality of the residents. The community of Hantsport as all of the amenities needed and the closeness to the City of Halifax.	Being initially from Hantsport working away for 40 odd years it was returning home for retirement (sort of).	The only negative thing that I have is really the cost of living due to the taxes and area rates. Attraction of new business would be nice.
	I love the peace and quiet of the country.	Rural area, with reasonable taxes	Nothing, I love it, the way it is.

Belmont	Quiet and friendly	Born and raised here	Let more industry in and natural resources developed
Beaver Pond Road	It is out of the way and private.	Because that's where my parents live.	I would make it so that there is a park or recreation site like a playground nearby, because the closest one is over half an hour away.
Falmouth	It is a quiet calm and friendly	I was born and raised here	nothing
Greenhill	The people	I was born here	I would change the way the roads work
Curry's Corner	It's private	Because it's peaceful and my house has privacy	I would repave my road
Three Mile Plains	The size of it.		I would hold more community events.
Falmouth	Sports access	Friends, sports in my area, and how close everything is	Lighten up the streets of Windsor and add more community activity
Brooklyn	There is a soccer field	I didn't choose	Fix the roads and make more recreational sites.
Curry's Corner	Its close to Martock and town which is convenient and its near the highway and stores	Because I'm a country kid and I couldn't adjust to living anywhere else	Nothing
West Hants	Hockey rink	My parents West Hants fans were here to tell a story to tell the whole world this is Saber territory our a go west	
Falmouth	The people, they are all very nice and caring.	My family lives here.	A public park, we don't really have one in Falmouth. Something with a fenced in area for dogs as well.

Windsor	School and sports.	I don't choose where I live because I'm too young.	I would change how the high school is patrolled. They have a lot of people driving unsafely, especially at night.
Upper Burlington	I like how it doesn't have a lot of traffic	It's where my parents grew up	Being able to get our own internet and better cell service.
Martock	Its a great area to live Martock ski hill and on tree are great activities for the family	Because my family lives here	Have a bike path
Hillsvale	How much room there is between the houses.	Because my parents and most of my friends live here.	More activities to bring the community closer together.
Windsor Forks	That I am just down the road from Martock and that it is very quiet	Because my parents live here.	Make the cell service better
Brooklyn	I love how it is so quiet and the people are so friendly.	Because my parents live there and I'm not old enough to move out, but I would continue to live in West Hants.	
	The quiet atmosphere.	Its a very nice community everyone is so kind	I would create more hangout areas for my area. and I would make it easier to access
Brooklyn	My friends are kind of close and we go to the same school	Because my parents live here	Add more recreational spots
Falmouth	The fact that everything is so quiet and calm.	My family lives here.	Maybe adding a hockey rink.
Falmouth	I have lots friends	I choses to live in Falmouth	Make a rink in big field
	I love my neighbors and the school nearby I also love the sports I can play.	My family is there	I would add more places for kids to hangout
Woodville	I love it because it is near a hockey rink and	Because my parents do	Less farming smell

	because it is rural not a busy city		
Summerville	That I get a chance to live close to the water	To be closer to the water	For there to be nicer people
Garlands Crossing	How many people know each other, near my house	Mostly because before I was born, my parents chose to live here. The other reason is because practically all of my friends live here.	
Centre Burlington	Nice mix of old timers & new comers; low taxes; friendly; organic farms; land-based fish farm!	Family roots are here; close to Halifax & Valley for work and for shopping; The 'Quarry'; the beaches have character!	Need better cell phone coverage in low elevations; need more and better internet choices
Centre Burlington	Many things! I feel safe, I can leave things unlocked, I love being close to the water, people are great, community halls are great, we can run a farm business here, other farms nearby, mechanics nearby.	It is within an hour from Halifax, but not too densely populated, and land price was reasonable.	It would be good to have better internet service.
Kempt Shore	My neighbours and all the recreation opportunities!	The neighbours next to (now ours!) the house for sale offered us tea and then lunch while we looked around the house & neighbourhood! We noticed beaches, health centre (doctors!), Quarry rec site, restaurant, schools nearby, all within an hour of HRM!	Actual high speed internet for all as the lack of it in many places makes it difficult for school work and businesses.
Bramber	The feel of being family with everyone	West Hants born and raised	More local work